

# MILITARY

ILLUSTRATED  PAST & PRESENT

No.35

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COLOUR PHOTOS

FRENCH INFANTRYMAN,  
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FORCE, 1880 — USMC  
PARA CAMOUFLAGE, WW2  
LANCASTER PISTOLS —  
MORE VIETNAM FILMS

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Left: German Grenadier on the Eastern Front

Right: A member of the Pioniers  
de Chasseurs à Pied  
c. 1840s



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# MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

□ PAST & PRESENT □

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## EDITORIAL

The reconstruction photographs in our article on the French 18<sup>e</sup> de Ligne, 1809, are the work of our colleague **Jean-Louis Viau**, assistant managing editor of the French magazine *Tradition*, where the pictures first appeared. Born in Paris on Cameron Day 1945, he specialises in French military flintlock firearms, and has contributed to *Tradition* since the first issue in 1987; in 1989 he joined the editorial staff, and took up his present post in January 1990. He has been responsible for many of the photographs in that well-produced magazine, covering subjects as diverse as weapons, models (which he also reviews), and full-size reconstructions of uniforms. M. Viau is passionately interested in the 18th century, but maintains contacts with French and overseas re-enactment groups covering many periods. Given the small sales of his magazine in the English language market, we hope to bring further translations and expansion of such material to our readers at regular intervals.

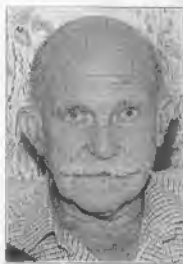
**Jack Bartlett**, who contributes the piece on the Lancaster pistols, has been shooting since his young days in Lancashire in the 1920s; in those days he shot and trapped rabbits, sold the meat — and the pelts, for latter's felt — and began turning the proceeds into muzzle-loading weapons, which could then be found for a few shillings. He has been an active gun journalist since 1933; and today, despite ill health, still shoots and writes regularly from his rural home in Herefordshire.

### Duxford Development

The Imperial War Museum at Duxford, Cambridgeshire, has placed a contract for a new Land Warfare Hall: this 5,000 square metre exhibition space should be built by next autumn, when work will begin on the displays. The hall will contain over 50 tanks and other military vehicles, ranging in size up to the rare Josef Stalin II and the current Chieftain 6/4c, and some 40 artillery pieces. A series of realistic battlefield scenes will trace the development of military equipment from the Great War to the Falklands; and on a smaller scale, items of soldiers' personal ephemera from the Museum's reserve collection will also be displayed for the first time.

### D-Day Vehicle Show

Once again Portsmouth is the venue for the annual D-Day Show of the Military Vehicle Trust, sponsored by *Essex and East*. On 25, 26 and 27 May Southsea Common will be a magnet for all interested in modelling, collecting, or just watching some 600 military vehicles — from bicycles up to



Jack Bartlett



J-L. Viau

the premier British show of its kind, and is bound to be well supported.

### 'MI' availability

In recent weeks several readers have rung us in alarm after attempting to order copies through local newsagents and being told that 'MI' is no longer publishing: the evidence to the contrary is in your hands at this moment... We can't understand this story, since the magazine has never missed a publication date. We can only assume that some idle retailer has been trying to avoid the bother of ordering single copies. As always, we can only add that a subscription is the best way to avoid this problem.

### Contributions

A word to would-be contributors to 'MI' is perhaps in order. We are always on the look-out for original, well-researched work; and if you have an

idea for an article which you think might suit our subjects and standards by all means write to the Editor. Do not complete the piece first, then send it in: we have our own requirements for the presentation of work, and hate disappointing contributors who have wasted their time by jumping the gun. Write in with a brief synopsis of the proposed article — subject, scope, organisation, length, and available illustrations, with a few notes on sources — and we will get back to you. It may take a while, but we will respond, one way or the other. Generally we look for main articles of around 3,000 words with perhaps eight to ten black and white illustrations, although shorter pieces are perfectly acceptable in many cases; it's important to note that we can only accept a 'package' of words and pictures, and that our fees cover both — it is up to contributors to assemble, and pay any necessary repro fees for, all monochrome illustrations. Colour artwork is naturally dealt with under a separate arrangement and is not charged against the writer's fee. Readers will know the usual range of our preferred subjects, and our style of treatment. Originality and illustrability are the key questions; articles should generally be 'illustration-led' rather than 'text-led'. We are always glad to hear from researchers and collectors even if they have not previously written for publication. We must maintain our standards of quality and originality; but every issue so far has contained work by first-time contributors, and quite a number of them had never had work published anywhere before.

### Video Releases to Buy:

- 'Führer — The Life of Adolph Hitler' (DD Distribution)
- 'Rommel — The Desert Fox' (Castle Vision)
- 'U-Boat War' (Castle Vision)
- 'The Battle of Britain — 1940' (Castle Hendring)
- 'Battle of Britain — The Truth' (DD Distribution)
- 'The Battle of Britain' (Pickwick)
- 'The 24th Regiment at Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift' (SSVC)

The 100th anniversary of the birth of Hitler saw the appearance on television of several documentaries dealing with his life. *Führer* is none of these, but a film made in 1961 by famed British documentary film-maker Paul Rotha. Originally titled *The Life of Adolph Hitler*, the film was one of the last feature-length documentaries made for the cinema, and was made to be shown in both Britain and West Germany.

The film attempts to explain how Hitler managed to hold a complete nation under his sway. The first half charts his career from the First World War, through the political unrest of the Weimar Republic, to his accession to power as Leader of the Nazi Party. The second half deals with the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War. Here the film loses sight of its original objective, and becomes more concerned with Hitler's conduct of the war rather than his personality. Allowance must be made for what were common-

ly held beliefs at the time the film was made. For example, the assertion that the RAF blasted the Luftwaffe out of the sky during the Battle of Britain obscures what a closely fought contest it was. A lengthy concentration camp sequence was doubtless intended to force German audiences to acknowledge certain aspects of their own recent history.

Readers of 'MI' will note footage of Nazi ceremonies, including bizarre pageants drawing on Teutonic myths. The historical significance of this film renders it of considerable interest, making the decision to change its title, presumably for commercial considerations, regrettable. The lack of sleeve notes on the film's production, or its maker, is a lost opportunity.

Castle Vision have released two videos of what is intended to be a set of six called *The War File*. *Rommel — The Desert Fox* begins with his experiences as a junior officer in the First World War, and his military career between the wars. It contrasts his admiration for Hitler as a leader with his disgust for the infamous SA. During the invasion of France and Belgium in 1940 he led the 7th Panzer ('Ghost') Division, as detailed in the Gallery piece in 'MI' No.28. Inevitably, much time is spent on the North African campaign, although curiously little detail is given about the battle of El Alamein: his adversary Montgomery is barely men-

tioned. The video contrasts the concern Allied commanders felt about the effect Rommel's reputation had on their own men with his unpopularity amongst fellow officers in the German army. The narration explains how his links with the July 1944 assassination plot conspirators led to his suicide on the orders of the man he had done so much to serve.

*U-Boat War* charts the history of the Kriegsmarine from its rebuilding in the years following the First World War to the final surrender in 1945. The video commendably deals with its subject in the context of German naval strategy as a whole; hence consideration is given, for example, to the conflicting views of Admiral Raeder, who believed in capital ships, and those of his successor Admiral Dönitz, who believed in U-boats. Both of these programmes are well made, consist entirely of archive footage, and last about one hour.

Last September's 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain has evidently inspired the release or re-promotion of three documentaries. *Battle of Britain — The Truth* is introduced by Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris, Chairman of the Battle of Britain Fighter Association. The video uses a combination of newly shot material and archive footage, and aims to lay to rest some of the myths about the battle. It gives detailed profiles of all the major aircraft that took part in the bat-

tle, illustrated by examples currently on display at the RAF Museum, Hendon. The film covers the tactics of aerial combat, and there is also a look inside the crucial Operations Room of 11 Fighter Group at RAF Uxbridge.

New documentaries about the Second World War released on video all too often add nothing new to popular knowledge, their main *raison d'être* being the use of often all-too-familiar archive footage accompanied by an uncontentious commentary repeating even more familiar facts. However, *The Battle of Britain — 1940* is of some interest in conveying a point-of-view which, although hardly new, is likely to revive old arguments. Its main contention is that Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, Commander in Chief of Fighter Command, was almost solely responsible both for the development of the correct strategy to counter the growing German threat before the war, and for the conduct of the battle itself. Dowding refused to squander precious fighter squadrons over France at the time of Dunkirk, and resisted the notion of 'big wings' of fighters which arguably took too long to form. The video also highlights the fact that Dowding was never given the accolade he so richly deserved. Astonishingly, neither his name, nor that of Air Vice Marshal Keith Park, his personal choice for AOC of 11 Fighter Group, appeared in the Air Ministry's official booklet published a few months later. The video relies almost exclusively on archive footage, but aviation buffs will doubtless enjoy the lengthy aerial com-

## ON THE SCREEN

bat sequence which dominates the second half.

Neither of these videos contains interviews with participants: in contrast *The Battle of Britain* contains little else. This 45-minute film, narrated by actor Robert Powell, was made by Roymark Productions on behalf of the Director of Public Relations of the Royal Air Force. Rather than give an objective chronological history of the battle it attempts to convey the experience of living in those times by letting

the survivors speak for themselves. Those interviewed interestingly include Polish and Czech pilots who flew with the RAF, but, alas, no representatives of the *Luftwaffe*. This video complements the previous two well, but the paucity of aerial footage may deter those whose main concern is the hardware.

Zulu War buffs will doubtless be interested in *The 24th Regiment at Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift*, produced by the Service Sound and Vision

Corporation. The video was written and narrated by Major R. P. Smith, Curator of the Regimental Museum at Brecon. It is well illustrated using a wide variety of contemporary photographs, drawings, wood-cuts and lantern slides, along with photographs taken recently on the battlefields. With no moving images, no music and no sound effects, this is effectively a 20-minute slide lecture transferred onto video. The narration is clear and concise, but might have benefited from

more detail. The description of Rorke's Drift even fails to mention Lieutenant John Chard, who, although in the Royal Engineers, was in command through seniority. However, it has whetted this reviewer's appetite for a visit to the Museum, where all but one of the VCs won at Rorke's Drift are on display. Those interested should write to the Regimental Museum at The Barracks, Brecon, Powys LD3 7EB, Wales.

Stephen J. Greenhill

The dust has not quite settled after the pre-Christmas redundancies at the two main auction houses. Both are still attempting to adjust to the new situations created by the recession and now the Gulf war. There can be no doubt that both events, in their own way, are affecting the market. Recession makes it less attractive to sell, since prices are likely to be less than previously and are probably not keeping pace with inflation. There is less available cash to spare for luxuries, so people are less inclined to buy. The lucky people at the moment are those with spare cash and no immediate commitments; they are in the position to take advantage of the generally falling demand and so are quite likely to acquire some bargains.

The number of foreign visitors to this country has certainly dropped over the last month, and it will be interesting to see what effect this will have on the numerous arms fairs. The first of these in London will take place in mid-February. Will the visitors and exhibitors be primarily British, or will some of the foreign dealers brave the supposedly terrorist-threatened air-

lines?

We mentioned last month that some houses appear to be raising the lower acceptance figure for material offered for auction. Most auction rooms have a basic figure, and lots which are likely to realise less than this are rejected as not worth handling, since the expenses will exceed the income derived from their sale. In the past most rooms were happy to accept lots to a lower limit of about £200; the figure is almost certain to be much higher now. It is unlikely to affect the medium-to-top-quality antique weapons and armour, but single campaign medals and the cheaper militaria items will certainly suffer. The effect of this upgrading will probably be serious for the future of collecting. The vast majority of collectors started with the cheaper end of the market, and as their taste, knowledge and cash increased they moved up the ladder. Young, impoverished beginners are going to find it difficult to acquire cheap collectibles. It may be that the smaller dealer will benefit, since he will be about the only outlet available to the beginner; but this, in itself, will not meet the situation, since he has to acquire stock, and if the rooms are not dealing in such material where does he go?

There are signs that rooms less well known for their sales of arms and armour and militaria will benefit. Glendinings and Bonhams are both planning to take advantage of the new situation to promote their dealings in militaria: Glendinings are to hold four combined medal and militaria sales this year. No doubt Kent Sales, Wallis & Wallis and Weller & Duffey will also see an increase in the number of

lower-priced items offered to them. Whilst it is possible to see the logic of the big rooms' policy, it must have some detrimental effect; hopeful vendors could well be put off by a rejection, and when something a little more valuable is to be disposed of they will take it to the rooms that were helpful.

The first sale of the year, on 2-3 January, was at Wallis & Wallis; and among the lots was a group of models and porcelain figures. The models of knights, Red Indians and cowboys standing at around 17in. high did well, selling at around £200 each. The porcelain figures fared less well, with interest only in the RAF figures at around £220 each. There seems to be no decline in demand for the Third Reich material, which had a very small buy-in rate; a 1933 pattern SS dagger realised £550. Military headdress badges continue to make good prices and all those with an Indian Army connection do extra well, as instanced by an officer's back pouch in patent leather with silver-plated badge of the 3rd Sikh Infantry, Punjab Frontier Force, which realised £305. A waistbelt and slings of an officer of the Central India Horse (pre-1947) went for £370. An officer's waistbelt clasp of the 10th Bengal Native Infantry, without the belt, sold for £160.

Christie's held an auction of 137 lots of varied militaria on 1 February, of which 95% were reportedly sold. Interesting items included an oil painting of a mounted officer of the 21st Lancers by John Chapman Mathews, dated 1904; this made £2,860 against a top estimate of £1,000. An intriguing SOE agent's suitcase radio receiver/transmitter, estimated at £500-£800, achieved £1,100. A hand-

some officer's lance cap of the 21st (Empress of India's) Lancers, with a French grey cloth top, sold for £2,420; and a final-pattern Prussian Garde du Corps helmet made £2,750 — this *folklorique* headgear is a perennial favourite with collectors. A rare Regency pattern shako and a laced coatee of the 84th Foot once belonging to Capt. Henry Statham, who served with the 84th in 1808-1816, and a coatee of the Nottingham Volunteer Rangers owned by Capt. Samuel Statham pre-1808, achieved £3,300.

The first real test of the new situation will come on 13 February when Sotheby's will be selling some arms and armour at their Billingshurst rooms; most are objects in the mid-range of prices, with the top estimate at less than £2,000. For top quality items of arms and armour the crunch will come at Christie's on 20 February when a sale of 236 lots will be held in its old site of King Street's Great Room. It follows the arms fair mentioned above, and the number of foreign bidders will be important — although with all the modern means of communication it is nowadays less important to be present in person. However, many dealers, the main buyers at auction, will say that there is no substitute for actually handling the object when deciding whether to bid or not. Particularly attractive these days must be the little group of fine quality helmets in the sale.

A specialist sale of ammunition at Weller & Duffey on 12 February contains some extremely interesting items, but they will of course not be available to most collectors since the firearms laws prevent them from possessing cartridges without an appropriate certificate — not easy to acquire these days.

Frederick Wilkinson

## THE AUCTION SCENE

**Below:** Part of Lot 137 from the Christie's militaria sale on 1 February was this rare Regency pattern shako and short-tailed coatee of an officer in the 84th (York & Lancaster) Regt., c. 1816-20; with a sash, and a slightly earlier Volunteer coatee, these achieved £3,300. But the auction also offered some intriguing pieces in the more moderate price ranges, within reach of many collectors: this late 19th century 'fighting lamp', strongly made for use in fort gun positions, sold for £260. The very heavy folding iron campaign chair, which went to the Crimea with Lt. Coleraine ('Poppy') Vansittart of the 11th Hussars, made £140. (Christie's)



# LETTERS

Several months ago we ceased publishing readers' letters not as a matter of policy, but because for some time we did not receive enough interesting letters to make it worth while using the space. We have recently received a number of more suitable letters, and with apologies for holding some of them back for so long, we publish them here. We remain happy to publish letters (edited if necessary) which genuinely advance the information given in articles, or to pass on to contributors letters more suitable for private correspondence. Please mark envelope 'Military Illustrated/Letters', and send to our editorial address (see p.3); letters for individual contributors should be addressed to them by name c/o the editorial address.

## Trained Bands

Keith Roberts' excellent article on the London Trained Bands in 'MI' No. 22 raises once more the question of the extent to which English musketeers had abandoned the helmet by 1642. Some light is shed on this by a laconic document dated 1 August 1642, listing the men of Capt. Quennel's band from south-west Surrey (published in Surrey Record Soc. Vol. III 'Surrey Musters' pp.331-333). It is possible that Quennel was an officer of the Godalming Hundred, who attempted to raise men for the King. His band

consisted of 34 'corsletts', 32 'musquet-teers', and another eight unspecified men. Each is listed as possessing whole arms, or whole arms except a sword, or a headpiece, or both. Of the musketeers 18 of the 32 had helmets and only 13 had swords. In other words, well over half were helmeted, and a musketeer was more likely to lack a sword than a helmet. It is also noteworthy that 13 of the 34 pikemen were also without helmets, and 15 without swords. Thus it can be argued that, at least in rural and unfashionable Surrey, a musketeer in the weeks before open civil war was more likely to wear a helmet than not. Matthew Alexander (Curator, Guildford Museum) 7 Oxford Terrace Guildford, Surrey GU1 3RJ

## David Cunliffe

May I offer some observations on 'MI' No. 33?

First, caption to Fig. 8, pp. 27, 28. This figure must be a Light Company man of the 95th (Derbyshire) Regiment of Foot, not the 95th Rifles as stated in the caption. The latter regiment had been removed from the numbered regiments of the Line in 1816 and re-titled The Rifle Brigade in recognition of its Peninsular and Waterloo services. The 95th

(Derbyshire) was raised in 1824.

Next, some comments on R. G. Harris' excellent piece on David Cunliffe, 23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers (p. 40): it is curious that the regiment was still wearing bearskin caps in 1848. Certainly such caps had been worn by Fusiliers and Grenadier Companies in the 1830s, but were abolished with the introduction of the 'Albert' shako on 13 Dec. 1843, which became universal for all Infantry except Guards and Highlanders. It may be that the 23rd, when painted by Cunliffe, having but recently returned from abroad, had not yet received the shako. Certainly the latter was worn when new Colours were presented on 12 July 1849.

Maj. Egerton and Sergeant, 77th, Montreal, 1848 (p. 40): Mr. Harris mentions 'a detachable band' of yellow material on the sergeant's right cuff. This sergeant is wearing a regulation greatcoat, apparently over another garment with dark collar and cuffs. Sergeants' greatcoats had the collar, cuffs and chevrons in the regimental facing colour (yellow for 77th). The collar would only show all yellow when it was turned up, unlike in this painting where it is turned down, thus showing only a line of yellow.

Maj. Egerton and Pte. Wright, 77th, Portsmouth, 1849 (p. 40): Mr. Harris

mentions, as an error, the fact of Egerton's shell jacket having white facings instead of the yellow on Wright's coat. This is indeed curious but there is, in a private collection, an officer's coat of the same period to another yellow-faced regiment, the 95th, which also has white facings.

Pipe-Major Wilson, 93rd (p. 41): his very unusual uniform (compare with Cunliffe's 79th piper) can be seen in three other pictures by different artists dated between 1852-54, and must, as Mr. Harris suggests, be of purely regimental devising, owing to the unofficial existence of pipers in Highland regiments before February 1854. Brig. Gen. Cavendish's history of the 93rd states that this dress had been worn by pipers since 1848, but that when the regiment left for the Crimean War the flat blue bonnet had been replaced by a blue Glengarry. However, the red doublet was not exchanged for the regulation green type until after the regiment returned from the Crimea.

Finally on Cunliffe, I believe there is, or used to be, another of his paintings in the Scottish United Services Museum depicting men of the 77th in forage caps and greatcoats around a camp fire at night. Michael Barthorp Clos du Mur Portinifer, St. Owen Jersey, C.I.

(Continued on page 44)

447 1900 20-18 1819 Army Book No. 267

## MOUNTED INFANTRY.

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Station: *London, England* Date: *18th July 1889*

Station: *London, England* Date: *18th July 1889*

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This Certificate will be filled in strictly in accordance with the following rules:

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Fair  
Satisfactory  
Poor  
Unfit

Stable duties: Excellent, Good, Fair, Satisfactory, Poor, Unfit

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N.B.—This Certificate can only be granted to soldiers who fulfil the following conditions, viz:—  
 (a) Two months' course of instruction under the authorized system.  
 (b) Four consecutive months' service in a regularly mounted division of mounted infantry.

(Given that the 1st Royal Scots are currently serving in the Gulf in the Warrior MICV, continuing the Mounted Infantry concept, this item is of special interest — Ed.)

## Mounted Infantry Certificate

I am a subscriber to your magazine, and was particularly interested in the article on British Mounted Infantry ('MI' Nos. 14 & 15). I possess a Soldier's Book of the 1870 pattern belonging to Pte., later C/Sgt. Thomas H. Gange of the 1st Bn. The Royal Scots, regimental No. 1815/738. I enclose a copy of his Mounted Infantry Certificate; the details are self-explanatory. His book explains that he was on operations in Zululand from 1888 to 1891. The certificate ties in with the reference in Mr. Barthorp's article to the Royal Scots MI's involvement in the Zululand disturbances of 1888. The photos show both sides of the certificate. Gange enlisted on 25 January 1871 at Westminster, aged 18. His other qualifications were Telegraphy and 'Sergeant Instructor of Musketry'. Capt. P. T. Crowley 1st Bn. The Queen's Regt. BFPO

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# Kabul to Kandahar, 1880

MICHAEL BARTHORP  
Paintings by RICHARD SCOLLINS

*Then we brought the lances down — then the bugles blew  
When we went to Kandahar, ridin' two an' two*

Rudyard Kipling

On 14 November 1914, while visiting the Indian troops in France, there died one of Britain's greatest soldiers: Field Marshal Lord Roberts. Since first commissioned in the Bengal Artillery in 1851 he had spent most of his service life in India, winning the Victoria Cross in the Mutiny, and eventually attaining the highest military command in the sub-continent from 1885 to 1893. In 1900, aged 67, in imperfect health and heartbroken by his son's death in action, it was Roberts who went out to turn the tide of disaster in South Africa by capturing the Boer capitals. Yet the event which had marked this much-loved and greatly-respected soldier for the highest commands had occurred 20 years before, in Afghanistan, when he had marched from Kabul to relieve the place from which he took his later title — Kandahar.

By late July 1880 the Second Afghan War, which had begun in 1878 to counter Russian intrigues at Kabul, seemed to be over. A new Amir, Abdurrahman, whom it was

hoped would be friendly to British interests, had been proclaimed and the British garrison was preparing to leave for India. Then, on 27 July, Sir Donald Stewart, commanding

British forces in Afghanistan, received news of the disaster to Brigadier-General Burrows' brigade at Maiwand three days before<sup>(1)</sup>, and the ensuing threat to the garrison at Kandahar by the forces of Ayub Khan of Herat, a brother of the former Amir.

Stewart at once recommended to the Government of India that the evacuation of northern Afghanistan should proceed, but that a picked division should march direct from Kabul to relieve Kandahar. Approval for this course was received on 3 August; and preparations began apace for the relief column, to be styled the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force and commanded by Roberts, then a major-general, who had played a leading role in the war's earlier operations. Three days later the somewhat demoralised garrison of Kandahar was invested by Ayub Khan's army.

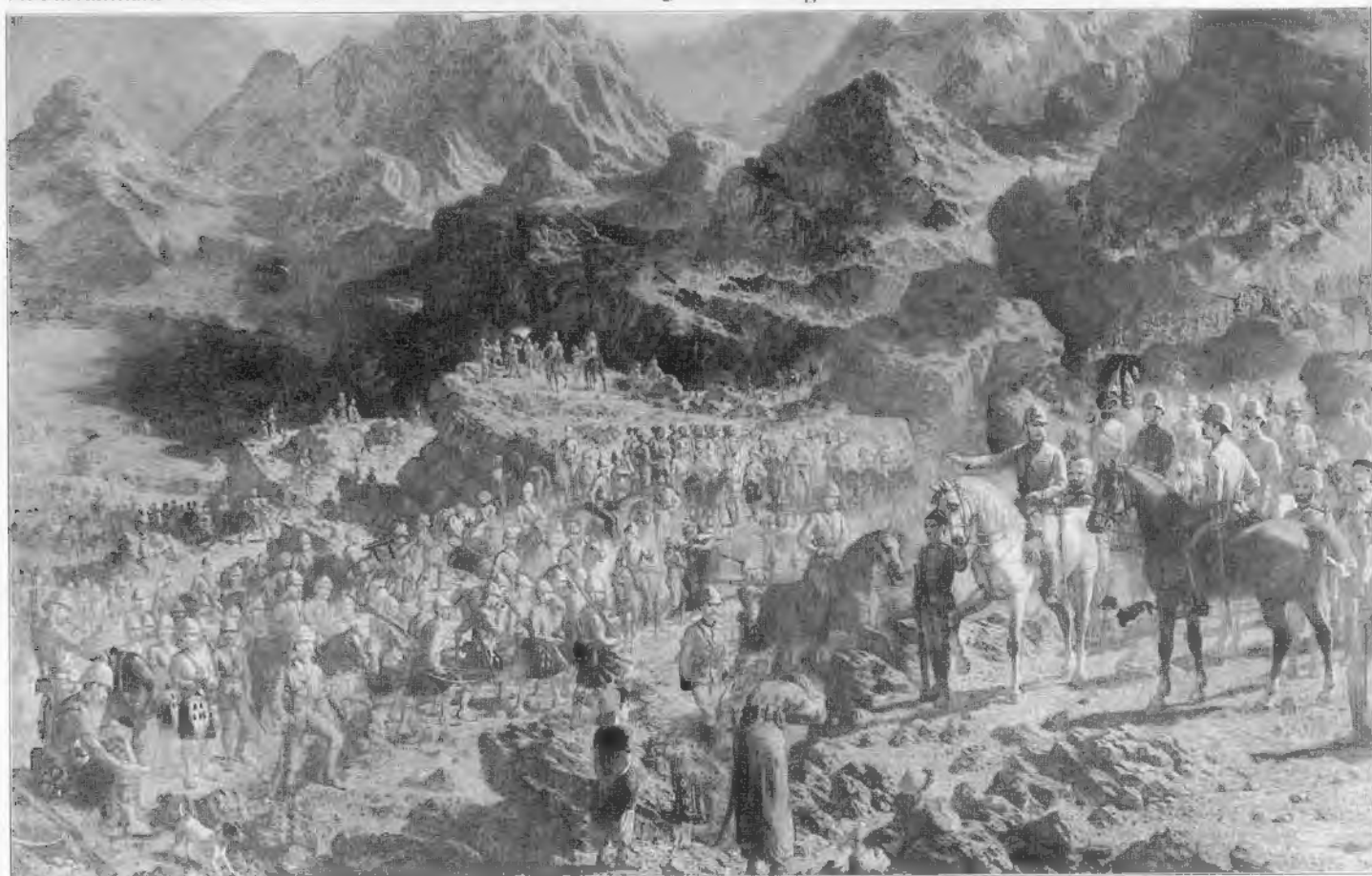
## THE FIELD FORCE

The force selected from the troops then at Kabul was organised as follows: *Cavalry Brigade* — 9th Lancers, 3rd Bengal Cavalry, 3rd Punjab Cavalry, Central India Horse; 1st Brigade — 92nd

Highlanders, 23rd (Pioneers) and 24th Punjab Infantry, 2nd Goorkhas; 2nd Brigade — 72nd Highlanders, 2nd and 3rd Sikhs, 5th Gurkhas; 3rd Brigade — 2/60th Rifles, 15th Sikhs, 25th Punjab Infantry, 4th Gurkhas; *Artillery* — 6/8 and 11/9 Batteries, Royal Artillery, No. 2 (Derajat) Mountain Battery (18 mountain guns).

In addition to the 9,986 fighting troops there were 7,800 followers<sup>(2)</sup>, and some 8,000 pack mules, ponies and donkeys plus six camels for hospital equipment. Because of the terrain and the need to reach Kandahar with all speed, Roberts took no wheeled transport and only light, mule-borne guns, which he anticipated would be adequate for any opposition met en route; to contend with Ayub's powerful artillery at Kandahar he hoped to make use of the garrison's heavier guns. Only limited supplies, including a quantity of sheep, could be taken from Kabul as a reserve, the daily

*The Kabul-Kandahar Field Force crossing the Zamburak Kotal, 13 August 1880. Major-General Roberts is mounted on the grey, pointing. Painting by L. W. Desanges. (Royal Artillery Institution)*



requirements of food and forage being obtained along the route through arrangements made by Abdurrahman's officials.

### The March

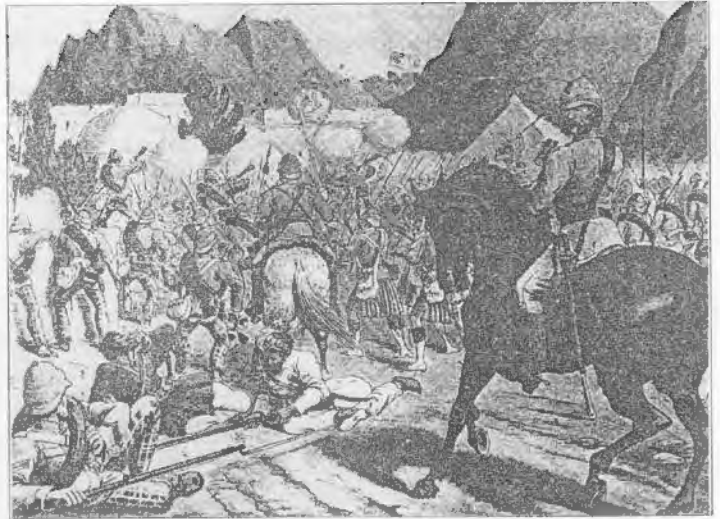
Leaving Kabul on 8 August, the force faced a march of 323 miles. Except for the 8,100ft. high Zamburak Pass (which proved exceedingly testing, coming as it did at the end of a ten-mile march six days out) the route chosen followed a series of valleys, some fertile, others barren. The temperatures varied from near-freezing at night to 110° Fahrenheit (43°C) at midday; there was no rain, only a baking sun.

Each day the troops were roused in the dark and started marching at around 4 a.m. Two cavalry regiments rode some five miles ahead with the other two out on the flanks, followed by two infantry brigades each with a battery, then the hospitals, ordnance and engineer parks, and the baggage, with the third brigade, its battery and one squadron as rearguard. Despite the early starts the rearmost troops, who always had the worst of the choking dust, seldom reached camp before the evening, their march being con-

stantly delayed by the need to herd along the flagging, undernourished followers and the frequently tired-out and overburdened baggage animals. A handful of troops, but many more followers, fell victim to marauding tribesmen, but no serious opposition was encountered. However, the hard marching in the heat, shortage of water, poor and irregular food, and badly-made footwear daily increased the number of sick soldiers and reduced the baggage train.

After 16 days' and 237 miles' marching the force reached Dhelati-i-Gilzai where there was a garrison of a 3rd Sind Horse squadron, two companies of the 66th Foot, the 29th Baluchis, and two guns of C/2 RA. Here Roberts learned that the Kandahar garrison was still secure, despite having made a disastrous sortie a week before. He therefore allowed his troops 24 hours' much-needed rest before resuming the march, taking the Khelat garrison on with him.

Two days later he learned that Ayub Khan had raised the siege but had entrenched his army some three miles north-west of the town. Soon afterwards he



made contact by heliograph with Kandahar, now only 20 miles away. Since it appeared Ayub would stand, he gave his men another day's rest so as to arrive as fresh as possible. On 31 August, 24 days after starting, he reached Kandahar. Notwithstanding the terrible marching conditions and the size of his force, particularly its unwieldy tail, he had averaged 14 $\frac{3}{4}$  miles per day.

### The Battle of Kandahar

The same afternoon he ordered Brigadier-General Gough, with the 3rd Bengal Cavalry and 15th Sikhs, to reconnoitre the two-

*72nd Highlanders fighting through the village of Gumdigan; Battle of Kandahar, 1 September 1880. Note the pipers, centre, the only killed ranks of the 72nd. R. Simkin chromolithograph from Boys' Book of British Battles (1884).*

mile-long position held by the Afghans on the Paimal hills, a range running north-east to south-west in front of the roughly parallel River Argandab. Ayub disposed of 3,800 horse and 9,000 foot (just

*92nd Highlanders and 2nd Goorkhas storming the village of Gundi Mullah Sahibdad. Painting by R. Caton Woodville, 1881. (Gordon Highlanders).*





*Sepoy Inderbir Lama, 2nd Goorkhas, capturing a gun for his regiment near Baba Wali. See text for comment on dress depicted. Watercolour by Colonel E. A. Hobday, 1895. (Colonel D. R. Wood)*

over a third being regulars) with 32 guns dug in at the most critical points. His main camp lay just north of and behind the Baba Wali Pass, which bisected the range and was strongly defended, as was the village of Pir Paimal to its south-west.

As soon as Gough began his retirement the enemy followed up in such strength that, despite a steady withdrawal by the 15th Sikhs, the 4th Gurkhas and 60th Rifles had to be deployed to cover Gough's men in. Firing continued until 6 p.m., but the 60th's forward picquets were sniped at all through the night.

Roberts appreciated that Ayub Khan expected the main British attack to come up the Baba Wali Pass, and therefore determined to use the Kandahar garrison<sup>(3)</sup> to threaten that approach, while turning Ayub's right flank with the infantry of his own field force, followed by his cavalry ready to cut in between the enemy rear and the river.

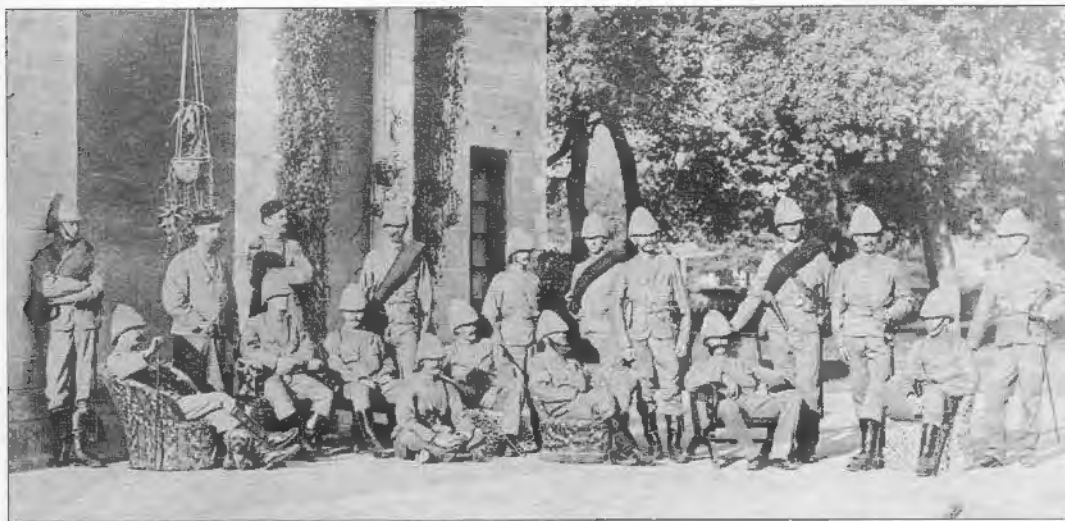
The following morning, covered by artillery, the 1st Brigade with the 2nd on its left attacked the villages, enclosures and orchards below the Afghan right; the 3rd Brigade was in reserve, ready to support the leading brigades or meet any counter-attack from the pass. The area attacked had been heavily reinforced during the night; but, after some two hours' fierce and sometimes hand-to-hand fighting, the two Highland battalions, the 2nd Sikhs and 2nd Goorkhas had cleared the villages and rounded the southern end of the Paimal range. Seeing they were out-flanked, Ayub's regulars further up the range began to make off, leaving the artillery and irregular riflemen to defend a high-banked watercourse guarding



**Centre:** *The 92nd Highlanders charging the Afghan guns. Painting by Vereker Hamilton — the first, 1891 version. (Peter Harrington)*

**Right:** *The 9th (Queen's Royal) Lancers on the march to Kandahar. Water-colour by Orlando Norie. (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection)*





**Left:**  
Officers, 2nd Battalion, 60th Rifles in khaki service dress before leaving for Afghanistan. (Royal Green Jackets)

the main camp between the west end of the Baba Wali Pass and the village of that name.

Without waiting for their supports, the 92nd and 2nd Goorkhas on the right, and the 3rd Sikhs on the left, went straight in with the bayonet, capturing the guns and driving the riflemen away. The two brigades pressed on to the main camp to find it deserted. Ayub's army was completely routed, but many escaped owing to the Cavalry Brigade's advance being much delayed while negotiating the difficult ground around the villages south of the range. Roberts estimated the Afghan losses at over 1,200 killed; his own were 40 killed and 228 wounded.

### DRESS OF THE FIELD FORCE

Any attempt to reconstruct the appearance of the Field Force must be speculative to some degree. The localities, troops and personalities of the Second Afghan War were, on the whole, well covered by photography<sup>(4)</sup>; but no official photographers accompanied the Field Force, and although some officers on the march are known to have had their own cameras, none of their photographs have yet come to light. Photographs taken in Kandahar some months after its relief do exist, but they are mostly topographical. Recourse must therefore be had to photographs taken before the march began — but even these are not always helpful, nor comprehensive of all units engaged. Sound evidence of any one regiment, British or Indian, cannot neces-

sarily be taken as representative of another; as the Committee on Clothing and Equipment, which assembled in Kabul in April 1880, reported: 'On taking the field officers and men have to discard many of the unserviceable and uncomfortable regulation articles of uniform and equipment, and substitute others according to the fancy of commanding officers' (author's italics). The Com-mittee urged that, for future campaigns, 'there should be one pattern of uniform and equipment for (active) service', but such standard practice would not be approached in India until after 1885.

Moreover, many of the photographs were taken in Kabul in the winter of 1879-80, when the climatic conditions and the troops' duties were very different from those experienced by Roberts' column. Some of the photographs showing the 92nd Highlanders at that time depict them in home service full dress, less feather bonnets; while those of the 9th Lancers display at least three different orders of dress, none of which would be suitable for the hot weather. Lastly, of course, photographs of that vintage can only suggest the colour of uniforms. What cannot be gleaned from photographs must therefore be supplemented by documentary evidence where it exists — and contemporary accounts do not often mention dress — and works of art with some claim to verisimilitude.

#### Clothing

One of the latter is L. W. Desanges' painting, 'Crossing the Zamburak Kotal', which

occurred on 13 August 1880. It includes portraits of many officers of the Field Force, as well as men of some regiments whose costume tallies with other evidence, both of which suggest that the artist researched his subject carefully.

Although many regiments at Kabul had had their peacetime red, blue, green or drab clothing with them, it is clear from Desanges' painting that some form of khaki drill (twilled cotton) clothing of a brownish hue predominated on the march. That of British regiments was usually their white drill summer kit dyed under local arrangements, resulting in various shades. Indian regiments do not seem to have had a white dress, some infantry wearing in summer either red or rifle-green in lightweight material, others, like the Punjab Frontier Force regiments, wearing drab even in full dress; most, however, had a khaki drill service dress made up under regimental arrangements. It was noted that only the Central India Horse achieved a uniform shade of khaki, having had their kit manufactured from natural brown-coloured cotton from Nagpore which did not need dyeing. For headdress, British troops and most British officers of Indian regiments wore the white foreign service helmet with puggaree within a khaki cover; Indian troops, their turbans with distinctive features; and Gurkhas, Kilmarnock caps with or without covers. For footwear, British, Gurkhas and Indian cavalry wore boots, Indian infantry a nailed shoe or sandal.

Turning from the general to

### Captions to colour plates overleaf:

#### Plate I

(1A) Sergeant, 2nd Battalion, 60th King's Royal Rifle Corps, from a photograph. 1871 Vâlise Equipment, with right-hand pouch at the rear in the Indian Army fashion. Water-bottle as in 1E. Martini-Henry rifle carried in the 60th's traditional 'bust-up' march-at-ease position. Sword bayonet.

(1B) Rear view of 1A with haversack omitted, showing folded greatcoat strapped to shoulder braces and right pouch at the rear.

(1C) Company Officer, 92nd Gordon Highlanders, from a photograph and a painting by W. Skeoch Cumming. Sam Browne equipment with Silver's ebonite water-bottle. Note the broadsword's cross-bar guard and grip steadied by a strap affixed to the belt. When carried, the greatcoat was rolled as in the photographs of the 60th and 72nd officers. Tartan: Gordon (government with yellow line).

(1D) Soldier's sporran, 92nd.

(1E) Private, 72nd Duke of Albany's Own Highlanders, from photographs. 1857 equipment with leather-covered water-bottle. The greatcoat is omitted but see Simkin illustration herein. Tartan: Prince Charles Edward Stuart. Rifle: Martini-Henry. The 92nd had the same equipment.

(1F) Rear view of 1E's socket bayonet and main pouch with haversack omitted.

#### Plate II

(2A) Sepoy, 3rd Sikh Infantry (Punjab Frontier Force), from photographs and the Kabul Committee's report. 1857 equipment (Indian pattern). The turban's orange fringe and the black puttees were peculiar to this regiment. Rifle: Snider. Bayonet: Socket, 17in. blade.

(2B) British officer, 3rd Sikh Infantry, from photographs and the Desanges painting herein.

(2C) Sepoy, 4th Gurkha Regiment, from a photograph. Indian Vâlise Equipment with water-bottle as in 2A. Rifle: Short Snider. Note boots, not sandals as in 2A and 2E.

(2D) Rear view of 2C showing position of kukri, right pouch at rear, and socket bayonet. Water-bottle and haversack omitted.

(2E) Indian officer, No. 2 (Derajat) Mountain Battery, from a photograph of the Battery officers. The British officers wore knee boots and helmets, the gunners 'kurtas' as in 2A. Sword: Royal Artillery 1850 pattern.

(2F) Indian gunners' mountain artillery sword and scabbard.

Continued on page 14





1C



1E



1B



1D



1F







2C



2E



2B



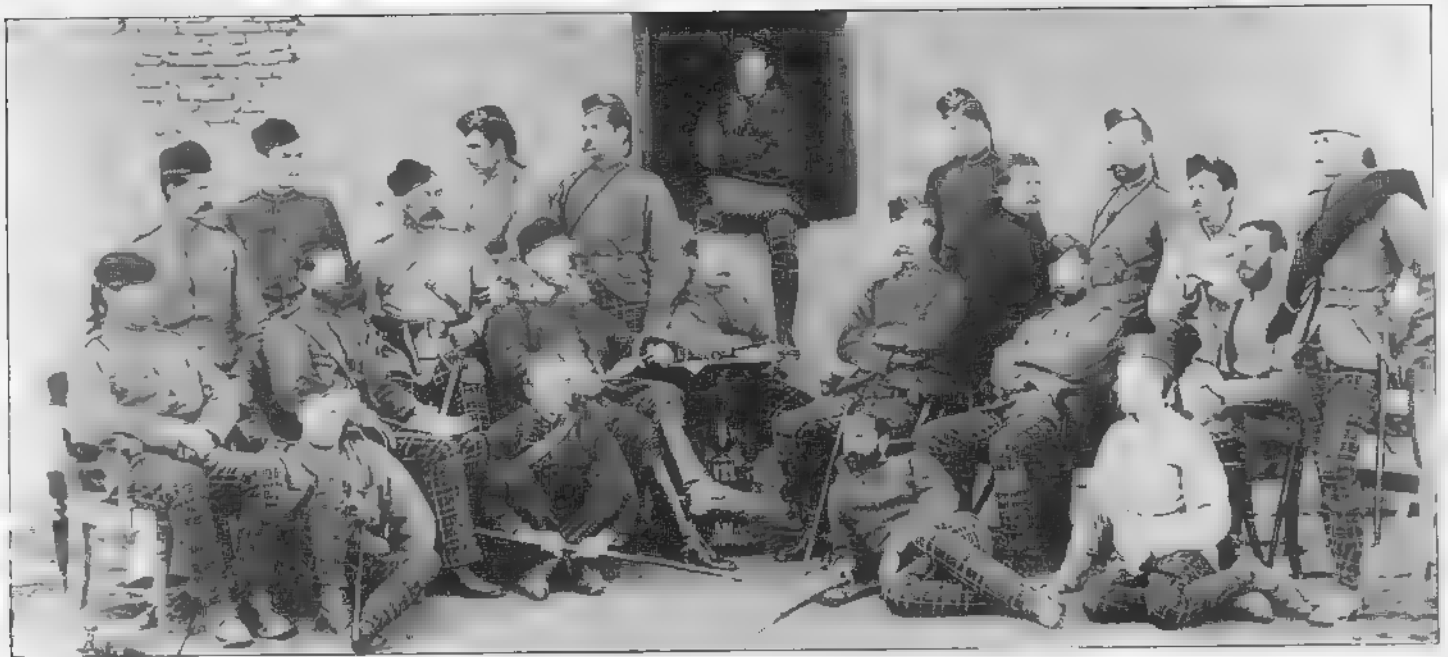
2D



2F







the particular, the 9th Lancers wore, below their khaki frocks, their home service blue pantaloons with double yellow stripe. Some of the Kabul photographs show these worn with puttees, others knee boots, the latter appearing in the only known picture of this regiment during the march (reproduced herein) by Orlando Norie. In view of the very limited personal kit allowed the Lancers would probably have worn their knee boots, rather than packing them or leaving them behind. Somewhat curiously Norie shows the parade spikes retained on their helmets; the same can be perceived on one lancer in Desanges' painting, as well as in a more dubious work by Stanley Berkeley of the 9th charging at Kandahar, which is more remarkable for the artist's imagination than for his accuracy, both as to the event depicted and the dress<sup>(5)</sup>. (Lieutenant Hunter of the 9th said they arrived late and 'did a great advance against a party of women and children, donkeys, cows and camels'<sup>(6)</sup> — hardly the epic charge painted by Berkeley.)

There is no pictorial evidence of the 2/60th Rifles, other than photographs of the battalion in its campaign dress taken at Meerut just before it left for Afghanistan in late 1878 (see colour plates Fig. 1A and the officers' photograph). The regimental history records this was the first time the battalion had

worn khaki dress<sup>(7)</sup>. Their wearing of marching gaiters is noteworthy as, although common enough at home and in Africa at this time, they seem to have been rarely used in India by British troops, some of whom adopted the Indian Army's puttees for the first time in this war; there is no evidence of the 2/60th having done so and, having been in India since 1867, they may have found their gaiters quite satisfactory.

The 72nd's and 92nd's dress of khaki frocks with trows and kilts respectively (colour Figs. 1C and 1E) is well-documented in photographs and pictures. The 72nd's officers wore matching tartan puttees over their trows, but in no photographs can these be seen on the men<sup>(8)</sup>. There is, however, a drawing by Sergeant Anderson of the regiment of himself and three privates with a heliograph in which all four are wearing puttees<sup>(9)</sup>; during the march this party belonged to the Force's signals detachment under Captain Straton, 22nd, who mounted them for greater mobility, which may explain the puttees as being more convenient for riding.

No specific illustrations of 6/8 or 11/9 Batteries RA have come to light, but those of other RA batteries in Afghanistan in summer clothing show gunners in short khaki frocks with only four buttons in front, and loose trousers, mounted ranks wearing knee boots.

Of the Cavalry Brigade's

Indian regiments, a photograph taken at Kabul of the 3rd Bengal Cavalry's British and Indian officers appears herein. On service all wore the regimental turban which was blue, gold, white and light blue. The upper, blouse-like garment with shoulder chains, known as a 'kurta', was worn by all ranks. Whether the Napoleon boots were worn in the field by the sowars is uncertain; a photograph of an NCO of the Central India Horse, similarly dressed but taken a few years later, shows dark puttees, probably blue, and ankle boots, but the comment above on the 9th Lancers' boots may also have applied to the Indian cavalry. The turbans of the CIH and the 3rd Punjab Cavalry were similarly coloured but differently striped, and all three regiments had red cummerbunds.

It is difficult to be certain how much uniformity prevailed among the six Indian and three Gurkha battalions of the Force. Photographs of Indian sepoy in Afghanistan show various upper garments in use: their red or drab dress tunics with regimental facings; a khaki frock without facings and the front buttons concealed in a fly; and a khaki drill kurta similar to, but shorter than the cavalry version, without a collar. The latter appears in the accompanying illustration of the 23rd Punjab Pioneers. It is presumably the same as the 'loose blouse' noted by the Kabul Committee as being worn by the 3rd and 45th

Officers 72nd Highlanders at Kabul 1880. Lt Col. Brownlow, seated right of the window, was killed at Kandahar. The officer at right is in marching order. (National Army Museum)

Sikhs, as well as 'other regiments', and commended as being most suitable for sepoys. Photographs of the 45th Sikhs (not on the march) earlier in the war certainly show them in these kurtas, so a sepoy of the 3rd Sikhs is illustrated accordingly at Fig. 2A. There is no evidence of the 2nd Sikhs but, as part of the Punjab Frontier Force like the 3rd, their dress may have followed suit, differing from the 3rd in their turbans which had a khaki fringe with a red stripe. The 15th Sikhs, 24th and 25th Punjab Infantry were normally uniformed in red, but it is unlikely this was worn on the march. A photograph of the 15th five years later has them in kurtas. Instead of trousers all sepoys wore loose knickerbockers tying below the knee, with khaki puttees around the lower leg; the black variety in Fig. 2A were peculiar to that regiment.

A Gurkha officer and sepoy of the 4th Gurkhas were photographed at Kabul in the summer of 1880 also wearing kurtas, although the officer's has a collar and a double row of buttons, fastening on the right. A sepoy of the 4th, based on this photograph, is our Fig. 2C. The 5th Gurkhas had fought the Battle of Peiwar Kotal in December 1878 in rifle-green, but went into khaki soon afterwards and



fought the rest of the war in it. Desanges shows one of Roberts' 5th Gurkha orderlies holding his horse, dressed in uncovered Kilmarnock, a khaki frock rather than a kurta, khaki knickerbockers, and what appear to be dark puttees, though the hue may be due to his standing in the horse's shadow; certainly when the 5th was still in rifle-green its puttees were khaki. A photograph of the 5th two years later shows them in khaki frocks with five black buttons, not kurtas like the 4th, which tends to confirm Desanges' rendering.

The 2nd Goorkhas' dress in this campaign has long been much discussed within the regiment, partly for lack of, or conflicting, evidence, and partly because of the regiment's strong attachment to its rifle-green uniform ever since the Siege of Delhi in 1857. Then, as the Sirmoor Rifles, it had stuck to that colour even after other British and sepoy battalions had adopted some form of khaki.<sup>11</sup>

Brigadier-General Watt, formerly of the regiment, recorded

that the 2nd fought at Kandahar in khaki made of unbleached rough cotton, dyed under regimental arrangements using an unpleasant-smelling dye; however, he had not been present, and was not even commissioned until 1891. In 1895 the soldier-artist E. A. Hobday (not present at Kandahar) painted the incident of Sepoy Inderbur Lama capturing the Afghan gun (see illustration), putting the 2nd in covered Kilmarnocks and khaki frocks; but this picture has a number of details which are wrong for the regiment in 1880 (and also for the more distant 92nd figures). R. Caton Woodville's 1881 painting of Kandahar and Vereker Hamilton's 1891 version (both herein) each has a few 2nd Goorkhas in khaki.<sup>12</sup> Since both Woodville and Hamilton (who had the advice of his brother Ian, of the 92nd) portrayed the Highlanders correctly, it might be thought they were reliably informed about the 2nd Goorkhas, although in both paintings the Gurkha figures are somewhat incidental and their details unclear.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, a 2nd Goorkhas' letter dated 4 August 1879, querying a General Order about summer clothing, makes

plain that the regiment's summer uniforms had always been dyed black, a colour more or less synonymous with rifle-green and easier to obtain by dyeing. Furthermore, in 1883 the regiment received an order requiring that its summer clothing should be changed to 'Karkee'. This suggests that between 1879 and 1883 the 2nd retained their black summer dress, although the later order may have been merely regularising the temporary adoption of khaki during the war, as done by the 4th and 5th Gurkhas. However, each Gurkha regiment was a separate entity, and the two latter's wearing of khaki in 1880 is not proof that the 2nd did likewise — as Woodville and Hamilton may have assumed for their paintings.

British officers of Indian and Gurkha regiments dressed differently from the native ranks and more like their counterparts in British regiments, wearing helmets in the field and some form of frock and trousers with puttees or gaiters. The cut of the frock could vary between regiments (compare the illustration of the 4th Gurkhas' officers with colour Fig. 2B — 3rd Sikhs).

The only Indian gunners with

the Field Force were No. 2 Mountain Battery, whose general appearance can be seen in the accompanying illustration. An Indian officer of the battery is at colour Fig. 2E.

#### Equipment

Because of the urgency of the Force's task, the distance to be covered, and the heat to be endured, equipment and baggage were reduced to the minimum. The baggage allowance was limited to one mule load for each British officer, 20 lbs. for each Indian officer and British soldier, including greatcoat (8 lbs.), waterproof sheet (3 lbs. 8 ozs.) and blanket (4 lbs. 8 ozs.), and 20 lbs. for each Indian/Gurkha soldier. Greatcoats were normally carried by the man, but on this march were occasionally put on mules. In Desanges' painting the 72nd, in the distance, wear theirs 'en banderole' (as they do in the Simkin picture); but the 92nd are without theirs, suggesting that battalions took it in turns to have them transported. However, one account<sup>14</sup> says the 92nd sold most of theirs before leaving Kabul, keeping only sufficient for night duties.

Common to every man was a drill material haversack for the day's rations, his water-bottle

British and Indian officers, 3rd Bengal Cavalry, Kabul, 1880. Lt Col. Mackenzie, commanding, is seated centre, with beard (National Army Museum)







Half of No. 2 (Derajat) Mountain Battery with 7-pdr. RML guns in Afghanistan. Most are in winter dress but those on right are in khaki drill (National Army Museum)

(not all of the same pattern), and his accoutrements for carriage of his sidearm and ammunition (70 rounds per infantryman); 130 rounds per man were transported.

In the fighting around Kabul the previous December, the men of the 9th Lancers had been accoutred with the regulation British cavalryman's pouch-belt for his carbine ammunition and sword belt with slings, having their carbines in a bucket attached to the saddle's off-side. Noticing how vulnerable and unhandy an unhorsed lancer was when divorced from his carbine and with his trailing sword, Roberts had ordered that in future carbines were to be slung across their backs whenever action was imminent, and the sword scabbard was to be fastened to the saddle's near-side. In the accompanying Norie watercolour the latter seems to be the case, and the

carbines are in buckets as no enemy is in sight. It also shows the usual cavalry practice of slinging both haversack and water-bottle over the right shoulder. They have their cloaks and blankets over the saddle's front arch, and the valise for their other kit at its rear.

For the *Infantry*, the new Valise Pattern Equipment, with twin pouches (20 rounds) on the waistbelt, had been introduced at home from 1871 but had not yet reached all battalions in India. Roberts' three British battalions had all been in India since before its introduction, but the 2/60th had received it in 1877, in the all-black leather common to Rifle Regiments. The 72nd and 92nd still had the 1857 pattern Knapsack Equipment, with the large 60-round pouch suspended from a shoulder belt and 10-round expense pouch on the waistbelt's right front. The bayonet frog hung from the left rear of the waistbelt in both Equipments.

Neither the knapsack nor the

valise were carried on the man in India, but the greatcoat, when carried, was rolled and slung over the left shoulder 'en banderole' with the 1857 Equipment, or folded and strapped to the braces across the shoulder blades with the 1871 pattern (colour Fig. 1B). The old, circular wooden water keg and the 1871 Oliver water-bottle were replaced in India by a brown leather-covered glass bottle container (Fig. 1E).

There seems to have been some variety among *Indian cavalry* accoutrements at this date. Generally they differed from the British cavalrymen's, being of brown leather and often deriving from the Sam Browne belt principle. Some sowars can be seen in the Kabul winter photographs wearing pouch-belts, but the Kabul Committee recommended these be set aside as 'unserviceable and unnecessary'. Instead it urged the adoption of a belt devised by Colonel Mackenzie, commanding the 3rd Bengal Cavalry. This had a waistbelt with two 10-round pouches in front either side of

the clasp and a third at the rear, the whole supported by two braces crossing at the back, to one of which the carbine could be attached by passing its barrel through a loop, while a strap from the centre back of the waistbelt was secured round the small of the butt. The sword was either carried in a frog attached to the waistbelt like a Sam Browne, or fastened to the saddle.

The 3rd BC may already have had this belt, but whether there was time to equip the other two Indian cavalry regiments before the march started seems doubtful. The later photograph of the Central India Horse sowar mentioned above shows a Sam Browne-type belt with a frog and one broad supporting cross-strap over the right shoulder to which is attached 10 cartridge loops in front; possibly there was another pouch for ammunition at the rear. The 3rd Punjab Cavalry was a Frontier Force regiment so may have been accoutred like the 1st PC, a sowar of which in 1887 had a brown leather waist-belt with





rectangular clasp, a frog, and small pouch at the left front, plus a pouch-belt.

There was also variety in the Indian infantry equipment. Some sepoy, like the 3rd Sikhs, had a brown leather version of the 1857 pattern with a slightly different expense pouch (see colour Fig. 2A). A sepoy of the 28th Punjab Infantry (not in the Field Force) appears in one of the winter photographs with the same pattern but in the British buff leather version, so the 24th and 25th PI may have had the same. Alternatively they, and the 15th Sikhs, may have had the Indian version of the 1871 pattern, either of buff leather with black pouches, or all of brown leather, which was then coming into service. The 4th and 5th Gurkhas, and probably the 2nd, had this pattern in black leather as befitted their status as Rifles. According to photographs Indian Army regiments with this pattern relegated the right-hand twin pouch to the back of the waist belt (colour Figs. 2C, 2D) — a practice also emulated by the 2/60th Rifles at

this time (Figs. 1A, 1B)

The sepoys' water-bottle was circular, 6in. in diameter and 2in. thick, made of light copper and covered in drill material with a strap of the same. It can just be perceived in the illustration of the 23rd Punjab Pioneers, which also shows their equipment designed both for tool-carrying and their other role as ordinary infantry. Some years later Gurkhas blackened their water-bottle carriage and haversacks, but this was not done in 1880; an 1882 photograph of the 5th Gurkhas show these items still in their natural colour.

Mountain gunners, who were armed with swords, had a brown leather waistbelt with a frog.

European officers of all arms, both British and Indian, generally adopted the Sam Browne for their swords and revolvers, with only one cross-brace; these could vary in detail according to the Indian supplier from whom they were obtained, but the principle of suspension was the same. The 2/60th officers acquired theirs shortly before leaving India for Afghanistan, and their photograph suggests that the belts were brown leather like other regiments', not stained black as became their practice later. The Kabul Committee recommended 'Silver's patent ebonite water-bottle, covered in felt' as most suitable for officers (colour Fig. 1C), but considered it too expensive for general issue to

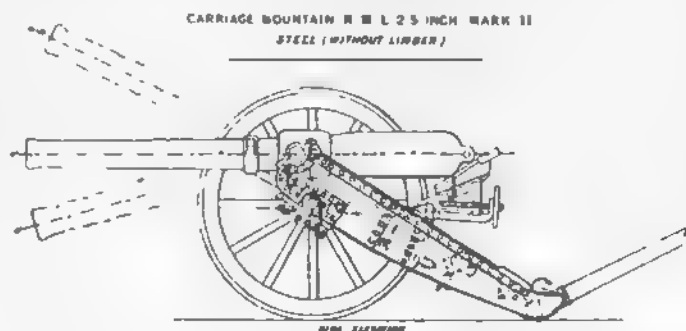
the men.

Some Indian officers had a type of Sam Browne (Fig. 2E), others had a simple waistbelt with slings and either a snake clasp (like the 3rd Sikhs) or a rectangular belt plate. The above-mentioned 4th Gurkhas officer in double-breasted kurta has a Sam Browne but with the cross-brace unusually over his left shoulder

#### Weapons

In the field 9th Lancers officers were armed with the 1821 Light Cavalry Officers' sword with three-bar hilt. Their men had the 9ft. bamboo lance and had received Martini-Henry carbines in 1878; but, according to photographs, their swords were still the 1853 universal cavalry pattern with three-bar guard<sup>(15)</sup>, despite a new pattern, of 1864, having been approved before they sailed for India in 1873.

The three British battalions all had the .45in. Martini-Henry



The 2.5in. RML screw-gun, with which 6/8 Battery, Royal Artillery was equipped From History of the Royal Artillery



rifle with 22in. bayonet, all sergeants and the 2/60th, as Rifles, having the sword type with yatagan blade (colour Figs. 1A, 1B), the remainder the triangular socket type (Fig. 1F). Rifles officers' swords had the steel 1822 pattern guard<sup>(16)</sup> with 1845 blade and steel scabbard, which was bronzed before they left for Afghanistan. Highland officers carried broadswords with the basket guard replaced by a plain cross-bar (Fig. 1C). All officers additionally carried a revolver of their choice, possibly the 1876 .45in. Pryse which was popular in Afghanistan.

Indian cavalry officers' weapons can be seen in the illustration of the 3rd Bengal Cavalry. Sowars carried Snider carbines and swords whose patterns varied between regiments, some having three-bar guards, others a single-bar stirrup hilt. Both officers' and sowars' swords had brown leather scabbards with steel tips. The Central India Horse had lances by 1885 and may have done so in 1880; in an earlier existence as Beatson's Horse they had carried hog-spears.

The Indian battalions were all armed with the Snider rifle, a breech-loader converted from the Enfield, with 17in. socket bayonet (colour Figs. 2A, 2C). Gurkhas had the short Snider, whose lower sling swivel was on the butt rather than above the trigger guard, also with the socket bayonet according to photographs of the 4th and 5th Gurkhas. Since the 2nd Goorkhas emulated the 60th Rifles in many respects they may have had sword bayonets, as shown in an 1887 Simkin drawing. In addition all Gurkhas had their kukries, carried in a frog on the right rear of the waistbelt (Fig. 2D). British and, as far as can be seen in photographs, Gurkha officers had the 1822 British infantry officers' sword; but Indian officers, like their cavalry counterparts, seem to have had various patterns, usually with a more curved blade than the British type — the 3rd Sikhs, for exam-

ple, had a guard whose bars divided either side of the grip.

The mountain batteries, 11/9 RA and the Indian No. 2, had the 7-pdr. RML (rifled muzzle-loading) gun, but 6/8 RA had the much-improved and recently introduced 2.5in. RML 'screw-gun', which had double the range of the 7-pdr.'s 800-

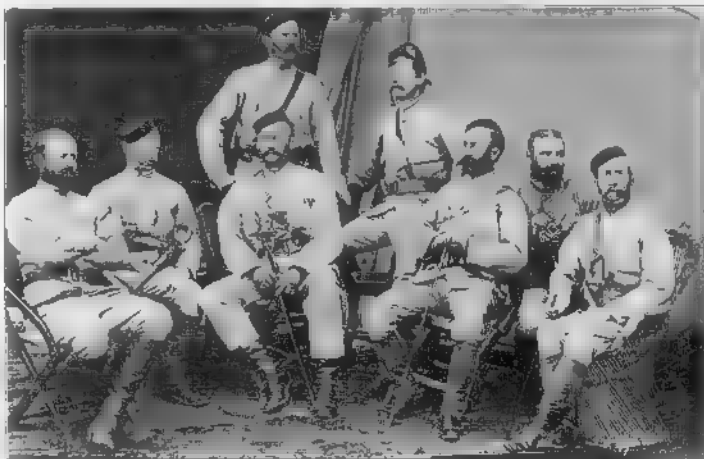
left for India soon afterwards, though a garrison remained in the town until April 1881. It was then handed over to Abdurrahman, but he also had to fight and defeat Ayub Khan before he could consolidate his rule over Afghanistan. Thereafter peace was maintained between British India



1700 yards; each battery had six guns. As personal weapons, the Indian gunners had the curved, stirrup-hilted swords as at Fig. 2F. Since no British mountain artillery sword was authorised until 1897, it must be assumed that 6/8's and 11/9's gunners had either the same as No. 2 Battery, or one of the Royal Artillery's sword bayonets: the 1856 pattern with yatagan blade, or the 1879 pattern with 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ in blade and knucklebow grip, though it must be unlikely the

and Afghanistan until 1919 and, although the Russian threat out of Central Asia continued to preoccupy the British authorities for many years, the Russians were never again able to acquire their influence at Kabul which had precipitated the war.

As Roberts parted from his troops each regimental band played 'Auld Lang Syne'. Years later he wrote how that tune always called to mind the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force: 'I hear the martial beat of drums



latter had reached India by 1880. The battery officers had the 1850 pattern Royal Artillery sword with the 1821 Light Cavalry hilt and fullered blade (Fig. 2E).

#### Conclusion

Kandahar was the last major action of the Second Afghan War. Roberts and his Field Force

and plaintive music of the pipes; I see Riflemen and Gurkhas, Highlanders and Sikhs, guns and horses, camels and mules, with the endless following of an Indian army. I shall never forget the feeling of sadness with which I said good-bye to the men who had done so much for me'<sup>(17)</sup>.

#### Centre

NCOs and sepoy, 23rd Punjab Infantry (Pioneers), Afghanistan, 1880. As well as their Sanders, they are equipped with axes, picks and spades (National Army Museum)

#### Notes

- (1) See 'MF' No. 17
- (2) Nearly 4,700 for the transport and other logistics services, 2,000 'dhoolie' (stretcher) bearers, the rest servants and grooms.
- (3) Three regiments, Bombay Cavalry: 2/7th Royal Fusiliers, 66th Foot; five regiments, Bombay Infantry.
- (4) See National Army Museum albums, 5514/39-42 and others.
- (5) Reproduced R Wilkinson-Latham, *North-West Frontier* (Osprey MAA/72) p. 17
- (6) Quoted Marquess of Anglesey, *History of the British Cavalry*, Vol. 3 (1982), p. 266
- (7) Maj-Gen. Sir S. Hare, *Annals of the KRRC*, Vol. IV (1929)
- (8) See author's *British Army on Campaign, 1816-1902*, Vol. 3 (Osprey MAA/98), p. 40
- (9) In Queen's Own Highlanders' Museum, reproduced in author's *The North-West Frontier* (1982), p. 79
- (10) See 'MF' No. 19, p. 13
- (11) 2nd Goorkhas Regimental Journal, 1958
- (12) Hamilton repainted his picture in 1905, see *British Army on Campaign*, Vol. 3, p. 8.
- (13) For comment on Woodville's accuracy, see 'MF' Nos. 11 and 13.
- (14) Hensman, see below, p. 466.
- (15) See 'MF' No. 21 p. 25, Fig. 2D
- (16) See 'MF' No. 19 p. 15, Fig. 2F
- (17) Roberts, see below, p. 494

**Chief sources and further reading:** Hanna, Col. H. B., *The Second Afghan War*, Vol. III (1910), pp. 462-82, 493-516

Hensman, Howard, *The Afghan War, 1878-80* (1881), pp. 450-529

Roberts, FM Lord, *Forty-One Years in India* (1910), pp. 472-95.

Robson, Brian, *The Road to Kabul* (1986), pp. 210-12, 248-61

Trousdale, William (Ed.) *War in Afghanistan: Diary of Maj-Gen. Sir Charles Macgregor* (USA, 1985), pp. 216-41

#### Left:

British officers, 4th Gurkhas, Kabul, winter 1879-80. (National Army Museum)

#### Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following. General Sir John Chapple and Colonel D. R. Wood (both late 2nd KEO Goorkha Rifles), Colonel P. S. Walton (Army Museums Ogilby Trust), Lt. Col. M. Broadway (Gurkha Museum), Major T. Craze (Royal Green Jackets Museum), Dr William Trousdale and Mr. Peter Harrington



# A Hero on Half-Pay

PHILIP J. HAYTHORNTHWAITE

The oldest cliché in numismatics avers that behind every medal there is a story; but it is not every day that a minor participant in the history of the comparatively distant past may be brought to life. Frequently this can only be achieved where there survives some physical relic: and we are fortunate in the survival of the items illustrated here, belonging at one time to one of the ordinary regimental officers of Wellington's army — Hugh Harrison of the 32nd (Cornwall) Regiment of Foot. Thanks are due to the present custodian of the collection, Alan Harrison, for his permission to publish the material.

The career of Hugh Harrison is typical of that of the 'company officer' — a man who never attained field rank, who spent most of his effective service in one regiment, and who received no rewards for his years of loyal soldiering — an unspectacular career, of the type upon which the army was founded. It is only the continued existence of his possessions, including a superb miniature portrait, which raises his story above the ordinary.

## A COMPANY OFFICER OF THE LINE

On 8 November 1805 Hugh Harrison, then aged 20 years, received the following recommendation from Maj. Campbell, commanding officer of the 62nd (Wiltshire) Regt., then at Hugerford:

'He is a very fine young man about 21 years of age, of a reputable family in Ireland, has had a liberal education, and in every respect fit for the service.' It is a popular misconception that all officers purchased their commissions; during the Peninsular War less than 20% bought their first commission, the majority being appointed as the result of just such a recommendation as this. This was fortunate, as an ensigncy in a Line regiment might cost £400, a sum too large for many of the minor gentry who formed the greater number of the ordinary regimental officers of the Line.

The 32nd Foot was an old regiment, raised in 1702. Although it was styled 'Cornwall' from 1782, and although it drew many of its recruits from that county, such affiliations were largely nominal — which explains why it was perfectly natural for a young Irish gentleman to be favoured with an ensigncy 'without purchase'. The 32nd had raised a 2nd Bn. at Launceston in 1804, so there were probably more than the usual number of vacant commissions waiting for suitable candidates like Hugh Harrison.

In any event, Harrison was commissioned as an ensign on 20 November 1805; and on 7 June 1806 was promoted lieutenant, this time by purchase. The difference between the cost of an ensigncy and that of a lieutenantcy was £150, the smallest between any regimental ranks, and within the reach of even reasonably impoverished subalterns.

Harrison's experience of regimental duty was widened by his appointment as adjutant on 8 April 1808; but his active service in the Peninsula was limited to a single major battle. Although the 1st Bn., 32nd Foot fought at Copenhagen, Rolica, Vimiera, Corunna, and at Walcheren, Harrison seems to have served

at this time with the 2nd Bn., which in its decade of service never went abroad.

The 1st/32nd was posted on 21 July 1811 to the 6th Division of the Peninsular army. Harrison purchased his 'company' (i.e. his captaincy) on 11 June 1812; and was present with the 1st Bn. at the battle of Salamanca, in which the 1st/32nd fought as part of Hinde's Brigade. At the outset of the battle it numbered 33 officers and 576 men; participating in the attack on the heights known as 'the Arapiles', it suffered casualties of 11 officers and 126 other ranks.

Before the regiment won its next battle-honour, 'Pyrenees', Harrison had returned to the 2nd Battalion. When the 2nd/32nd was 'reduced' — disbanded — upon the conclusion of peace in 1814, on 24 September, Harrison was placed on half-pay: the means of financial support for officers who retained their commission but had no regimental employment.

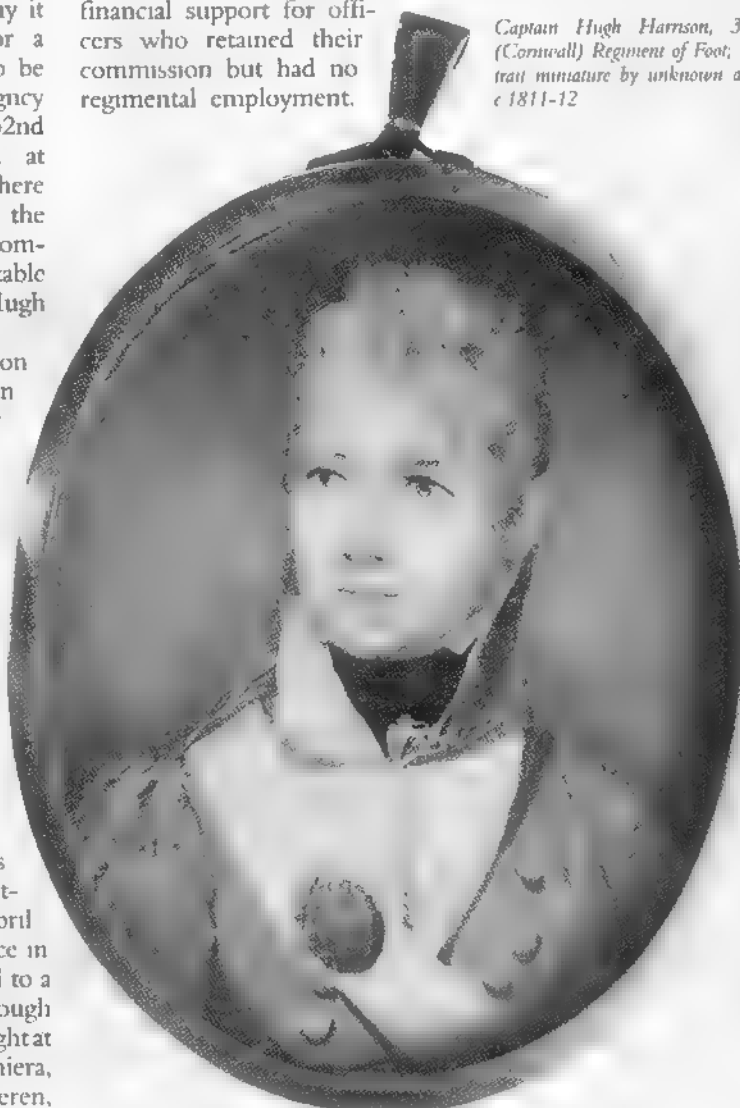
But by paying the difference between a captaincy at full pay and one at half-pay, Harrison returned to duty as a captain in the 1st Bn. on 19 January 1815, and was present in that capacity during the Waterloo campaign.

## WATERLOO AND AFTER

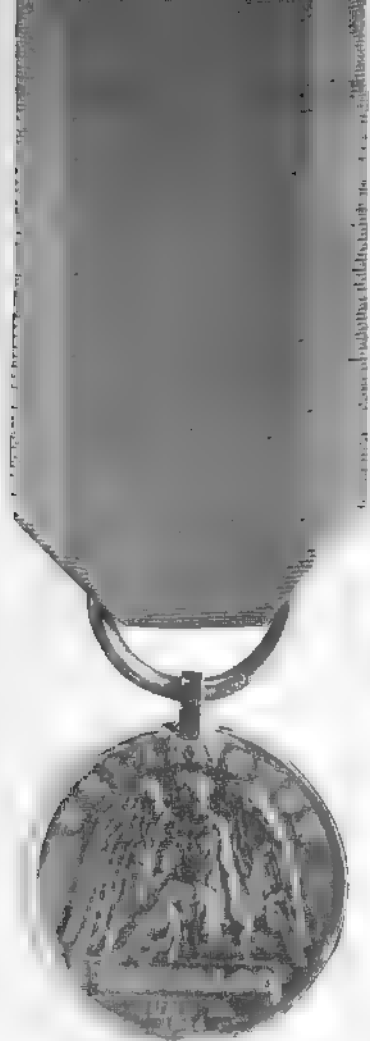
The 32nd served in the 8th Brigade of Picton's 5th Division, suffering especially severe casualties at Quatre Bras (370 out of 662 during the campaign); of the 37 officers, only 12 came through unscathed. One of the severely wounded at Waterloo was Hugh Harrison.

He recovered from his injuries, however, and returned to active duty. He transferred from the 32nd (perhaps on hearing that they were to be sent to garrison the Ionian Islands!) to the 5th (Northumberland)

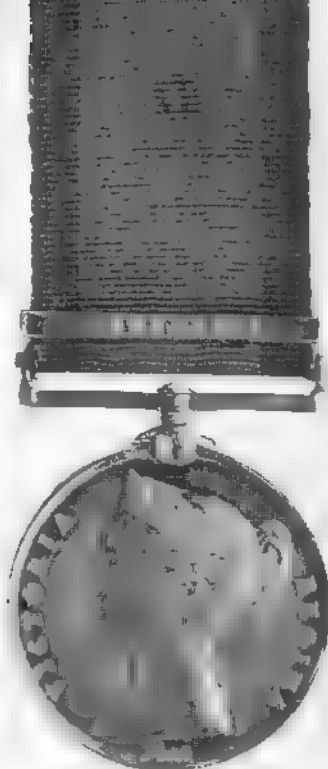
Captain Hugh Harrison, 32nd (Cornwall) Regiment of Foot; portrait miniature by unknown artist c 1811-12







Hugh Harrison's Waterloo Medal (reverse)



Hugh Harrison's Military General Service Medal (obverse)

### THE HARRISON COLLECTION

Four items belonging to Hugh Harrison still exist. These include his Waterloo Medal, and the Military General Service Medal (issued retrospectively in 1848) bearing the single clasp 'Salamanca' (1). The other items are less common.



Légion d'Honneur preserved with Capt. Harrison's medals. It appears to be a transitional example, with features of both the so-called fourth type, of 1808 (crown details, right facing eagle) and the fifth, of 1811 ('appled points' on the arms of the cross).

The extremely fine portrait miniature shows his uniform as an officer of the 32nd, distinguished by its white facings and gilt buttons, with the single gold epaulette of the battalion companies, and the buttonholes rendered in 'twist' embroidery. Two patterns of shoulder belt plate were worn by the 32nd during the Napoleonic Wars. A gilt oval bearing a crowned star with '32', inside a strap inscribed 'Cornwall Regt.' (with a grenade or horn below the number for the flank companies) was replaced by a second type: a rectangular gilt plate with rounded corners, bearing a silver '32' within a crowned strap inscribed 'Cornwall'. Ivall and Thomas date the change to 'c. 1805', but it may have been slightly later, as it appears that Harrison's portrait was probably painted before Salamanca. The miniature is unsigned and the artist unknown, but it may perhaps be the work of William Wood.

The fourth item in the collection is a silver, fifth-grade cross of the *Légion d'Honneur*, in a condition which suggests that it was a souvenir acquired by Harrison in the Peninsula or at Waterloo (given his

wound at the latter battle, probably the former). Though its history will now never be known, it obviously had enough significance to Harrison for his family to preserve it with his own medals and portrait, to complete one of the most interesting small collections relating to a company officer of the Line now surviving.

### Research

No personal papers were preserved with the Harrison medals, all the above facts being gleaned from extant 'official' sources; and this demonstrates how research may shed light on the career of the ordinary soldier.

In the case of officers, all who served at Waterloo are listed, with dates of commission and brief biographical notes, in *The Waterloo Roll Call* (Charles Dalton, 2nd edn. London 1904, reprinted London 1971). Entitlement to and clasps of the Military General Service Medal may be found in the medal roll, published and edited by Col. Kingsley O.N. Foster (1947). Statements of officers' services were requested in 1828 (retired on full and half-pay) and 1829 (serving); these exist in the Public Record Office, reference WO/25, and can provide much significant information both on the career and the more personal details of these officers. *Army Lists* are useful in establishing seniority within a regiment at any given time, with dates of commission and often (in multi-battalion regiments) the identity of the battalion with which the officer served. M

### Notes

(1) No system of award was available for other ranks and junior officers at this period, irrespective of what meritorious service they might have performed. Though medals might be awarded by the regiment to deserving recipients, only one is recorded for the 32nd during the entire Napoleonic Wars, a silver medal presented by Capt. John Priestly to Sgt. William Allen, for being the best shot in the regimental Light Company in 1803.

(2) *The Military Insignia of Cornwall*, D. Endean Ivall & C. Thomas (Penzance, 1974).



# The French 18<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Ligne, 1809

PHILIP J. HAYTHORNTHWAITE

Colour photographs by JEAN-LOUIS VIAU

We are happy to reprint here a set of striking photographs of a 'reconstructed' NCO of Napoleon's 18th Line Infantry by our respected colleague Jean-Louis Viau, which first appeared in the French magazine *Tradition*, of which M. Viau is the managing editor. Background information on this interesting regiment, and on uniform practice of that date, is provided by our regular contributor Philip Haythornthwaite.

The 18<sup>e</sup> de Ligne of Napoleon's army bore the number of one of the most distinguished regiments of the old French Royal army, the *Royal Auvergne*, especially celebrated for its service in the American War of Independence. The 18<sup>e</sup> Demi-Brigade was formed in March 1796 from several earlier *demi-brigades* and volunteer battalions, and in September 1803 resumed the title 'regiment', a term which had been prohibited in the Revolutionary era for political reasons.

The 18th served with distinction in Italy and Egypt, and was present at many of Napoleon's greatest battles. In the 1805 campaign it served at Ulm and Austerlitz, against Prussia at Jena, against Russia at Eylau, at Heilsberg and Eckmühl. In the 1809 campaign it fought at Aspern-Essling and Wagram; and in 1812 it served with III Corps of the *Grande Armée* in the attack on Russia. During this campaign it fought at Smolensk and Borodino, suffering heavy losses (including at Krasnyi the capture of a second Eagle, that of the 2nd Bn. having been lost at Eylau).

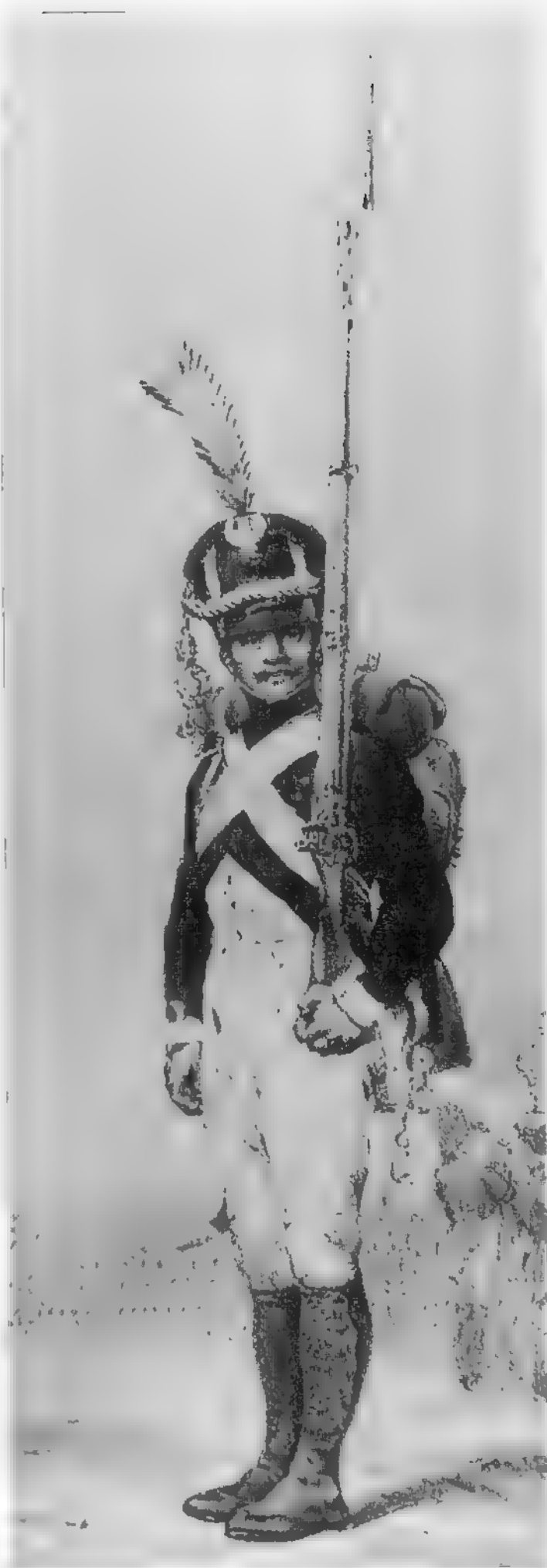
The regiment took the field again in 1813, when it fought at Dresden, Leipzig and Hanau. In 1814 it served in the defence of France, at La Rothière and Montereau. Almost the only campaigns of the Empire in which the 18th was not present were the Peninsular War and

the 'Hundred Days' campaign in 1815, in which year it formed part of the *Armée d'Alsace*.

## ORGANISATION

At the period covered by the reconstructed uniform illustrated, the French infantry was organized according to a decree of 18 February 1808, which reduced the number of companies in a battalion from nine to six. According to this establishment each regiment comprised five battalions, one of which was designated as a depot battalion composed of only four companies (of fusiliers) and commanded by the battalion's senior captain; a major was in command of the depot itself. This formation served as a source of replenishment for the four 'active service' battalions or *bataillons de guerre*, each of which was commanded by a *chef de bataillon* and was composed of six companies. Four of these were of ordinary line infantry, styled fusiliers, and two were designated as 'élite': the grenadiers (theoretically the battalion's most stalwart veterans) and *voltigeurs* (light infantry, supposedly the most agile members of the battalion, most adept at skirmishing). In practice, although these com-

*The appearance of a typical French infantryman of 1809, in a lithograph by Villam depicting a Conscrip of the Imperial Guard. The ordinary Line infantry uniform had white lapels, unlike this example, and their grenadiers wore epaulettes.*





ppanies did possess some of these characteristics, there was little difference in tactical ability between French line and light infantry: all were adept at fighting both in line and in skirmish order.

Each company was commanded by a captain and comprised in addition a lieutenant, a *sous-lieutenant*, a sergeant-major, four sergeants, a *caporal-fourrier* (quartermaster-corporal), eight corporals, 121 privates and two drummers. Regimental staff included a colonel, a major, the four *chefs de bataillon*, five adjutants and five assistants, ten sergeant-majors, a drum-major and drum-corporal (*caporal-tambour*), a bandmaster and seven musicians, four craftsmen, a quartermas-

ter, paymaster, surgeon-major and four assistants, an Eagle-bearer (*premier porte-aigle*, holding *sous-lieutenant* rank) and two escorts (*deuxième* and *troisième porte-aigle*, veterans whose illiteracy prevented ordinary promotion but who ranked as sergeants and received the pay of sergeant-majors). From 1808, due to the number of Eagles lost in action, it was decreed that only one should be carried per regiment, instead of one per battalion as before; the other battalions carried marker-flags instead. Each *bataillon de guerre* included four pioneers (*sapeurs*) in the grenadier company, with one *sapeur* corporal per regiment.

The total establishment of a regiment was thus 108 officers and 3,862 other ranks, but this number was rarely achieved: at the outset of the 1809 campaign, for example, the three battalions of the 18th which served in the campaign numbered some 1,902 men. In this campaign the regiment served in Massena's IV Corps, in Ledru's brigade of Legrand's 1st Division. The 18th's colonel, Baron Ravier, was promoted to *Général de Brigade* on 30 May after distinguished conduct at

Aspern; he was succeeded by Col. Pelleport, who commanded the regiment at Wagram and was created a Baron of the Empire after the battle.

## UNIFORM

The appearance of the French infantry had altered in 1806 with the general adoption of the shako, an item which had hitherto been worn only by light troops. The 1806 shako had a felt or board body, widening slightly towards the top, with a leather crown, peak, bands around top and bottom, and often strengthening-chevrones at the sides. At the front was carried a tricolour cockade, above a brass, lozenge-shaped plate bearing an embossed eagle over a voided regimental number, though even at this early stage regimental patterns of plate were used: for example, the Carl Collection shows the 18th c. 1809 using eagle-on-crescent plates. Brass chin-scales were adopted by some regiments a considerable period before their official sanction (on the redesigned shako of 1810), and may have been worn by the 18th as early as 1807. Braided cords were worn by some regiments, coloured white for fusiliers, red for grenadiers and green and/or yellow for *voltigeurs*; the Carl Colln shows the 18th's *voltigeurs* with green cords, and a red plume with yellow tip over a yellow ball. Grenadiers usually had red plumes, and pompons in company colouring were adopted by some fusiliers. Some grenadiers retained the bearskin cap for dress uniform (shown in the Carl Colln. as having a red plume, white cords and a brass plate bearing an embossed grenade). Waterproof covers might be worn on the shako in service dress, sometimes bearing painted regimental markings.

The ordinary uniform was a development of that introduced in 1793: a dark blue coat with red cuffs and standing collar, white lapels cut open to reveal the waistcoat, and white lining and turnbacks. Although regimental distinctions existed, there was no attempt until 1806 to introduce officially a

method of identifying the regiment in any way other than by the minutiae of insignia.

In that year a new coat was introduced, of similar cut but reverting to white, the traditional colour of the French infantry uniform, with a scheme of regimental facings which ensured that no two regiments would wear exactly the same uniform. This coat was probably introduced largely as a way of overcoming the shortage of indigo dye required by the previous blue uniform, but it was soon abandoned: ordered in April 1806, in October 1807 it was replaced by a return to the previous blue uniform — Napoleon supposedly being sickened by the sight of bloodstains, very visible on the white uniform, after the battle of Eylau. The issue of the white uniform was never widespread — perhaps only a dozen regiments received it — but among those was the 18th, which wore scarlet lapels and cuffs and white collars, though red collars may have been worn. However, the change to blue uniforms was not immediate as the white issue had to be allowed to wear out before being replaced, and not until late 1809 had it disappeared entirely.

Although a number of regimental distinctions were worn with the blue coat (some so ephemeral that they might not survive the periodic re-clothing of the unit), they were less evident than the company-distinctions which were universal in the French infantry. Although these also varied between regiments, in general fusilier companies wore turnback-badges often in the shape of a star, and plain blue cloth shoulder-straps; grenadiers had fringed red epaulettes and bursting-grenade turnback-badges. *Voltigeurs* often had yellow or *chamois* collars (shown for the 18th by the Carl Colln with red piping), bugle-horn turnback-badges, and epaulettes in combinations of green and yellow: for the 18th, the Carl Colln. shows green with yellow crescents. Piping was generally red upon the lapels, turnbacks and shoulder-straps, and white upon the collar and

### Below:

Loose trousers were commonly worn on campaign, over the gaiters, as in this lithograph depicting a *Garde Nationale* of the Imperial Guard, c. 1810.

### Below right:

Typical blue company uniform of the period: a *voltigeur* depicted in a Villam lithograph. The *chamois*-coloured collar and plume and epaulettes in combinations of green and yellow are typical of the light company of Line battalions.





cuffs: buttons were brass. The cuffs might have a three-button flap (blue, red or white), or be without a flap but with a line of piping on the open seam; the Carl Colln. shows the 18th with red cuff-flaps piped white.

In addition to the lapelled coat, a single-breasted *surtout* could be worn, as favoured by officers for service dress throughout the Napoleonic era; and this is the garment worn by our reconstructed sergeant. Rank insignia was carried on the lower sleeve by non-commissioned officers: two orange lace bars for corporals, a gold bar on red backing for sergeants, and two such bars for sergeant-majors. Long-service chevrons, worn on the upper arm, were normally red or orange, or gold for senior NCOs (sergeants and above), who often had gold intermixed in their shako-cords, epaulette-fringes and edging.

#### Smallclothes

Beneath the coat was worn a white, single-breasted waistcoat, usually with sleeves and a standing collar (red for some regiments, yellow or *chamois* for *voltigeurs*), which doubled as an undress jacket.

Legwear consisted of white breeches and black garters, non-regulation white garters being used by many regiments in summer or for parade; grey or off-white linen garters were often used for ordinary wear. For campaign, loose trousers might be worn, commonly coloured grey, white or beige, though blue and (especially in Spain) brown were not unknown. Greatcoats were introduced generally only from 1805, when they were issued to troops on active service and purchased from regimental funds. Although the issue was formalized in 1806, so that all members of *bataillons de guerre* received a coat, there was no universal pattern, both single- and double-breasted coats being worn, ranging in colour from grey through shades of brown from beige to brownish-maroon. For élite companies it was usual for the epaulettes to be transferred from the coat

*Infantry sentry, in a print published by Pierre Martinet. The single-breasted greatcoat, to be considered as an item of campaign equipment rather than strictly as a piece of uniform, was made up from available cloth in a wide variety of shades, as in this case, it seems to have been quite common to smarten it by moving élite company epaulettes from the habit to the greatcoat. As a grenadier he also wears the sabre-briquet, and has red braid and cords on his shako, the latter has a tubular waterproof cover on the plume, and a non-regulation eagle-over-shield plan.*

when the greatcoat was worn.

#### Equipment

Equipment remained reasonably standard throughout the period, belts being made of buff-leather, generally whitened. For those not armed with sabres a single belt was worn over the left shoulder, supporting both the cartridge-box (at the rear of the right hip) and the bayonet, which had a brown



*The regulation yellow metal shako plate of 1806, here that of the 16<sup>e</sup> de Ligne*

leather scabbard and was suspended from a frog at the right front of the belt. The cartridge-box was constructed of black leather, originally around a wooden block drilled with holes to accommodate cartridges, and later with a box interior; later patterns had two small straps underneath in which the *bonnet de police* (forage cap) was carried. The cartridge-boxes of élite companies usually bore a brass grenade or bugle-horn badge, and occasionally a regimental number for



fusiliers. On campaign a white fabric cover might be fitted over the box, often lettered with the regimental (and sometimes battalion and company) identification. Those armed with sabres wore a second belt, over the right shoulder, with a combined frog for both sabre and bayonet.

The calfskin knapsack, tanned with the hair on, was carried on the back by means of buff-leather shoulder-straps attached by wooden toggles, with the rear flap fastened by three leather straps with brass buckles; in 1806 it was provided

with three additional straps, one to encircle the knapsack vertically, and two upon the top to accommodate the rolled greatcoat, this having previously been tied on with string or privately-acquired straps. Other items of campaign equipment would include a canvas haversack (worn over the shoulder) and a canteen, the latter provided by the individual and ranging from gourds to wooden kegs, metal flasks, and glass bottles in wickerwork cases.

#### Weapons

The sabre — known as a *sabre-briquet*, a somewhat insulting title implying that its only use was to rake a fire! — was of the *An IX/XI* patterns, with a single knuckle-bow and a brass hilt cast in one piece (including the ribbed grip), with a short, slightly curved blade and a black leather scabbard with brass fittings. The sabre was

**continued on page 26**



# Sergeant of Fusiliers,



(Left, top & bottom)

In campaign dress, the sergeant wears a blue-grey greatcoat (which could equally be any shade of brown or grey); white marching trousers over rough grey cloth gaiters; and a black oilcloth shako cover laced in place, with painted regimental number, and neck-flap tied up behind the exposed pompon. This bears the battalion number; its violet colour identified 4th companies by the February 1811 regulations, but there were unit variations both before and after that date.

Perhaps just promoted, the sergeant retains his old cartridge-box crossbelt with the bayonet scabbarded at the front — such variations would be common in the field. Again, he should typically carry the musket fusil d'infanterie modèle 1777 corrigé An IX; but has acquired here the fusil de dragon modèle An IX-An XIII, officially limited to voltigeur companies. The whitened buff-leather sling has a brass buckle.

Photographs and captions by  
JEAN-LOUIS VIAU

Our young sergeant of fusiliers is recreated courtesy of 'Le 18<sup>e</sup> de Ligne' — after the Dijon-based 'Grenadiers du 27<sup>e</sup>' the oldest such group in France, formed in 1984. Under their captain Régis Surmont some 25 members (who seek recruits...) work to recreate the appearance and campaign life of 1st Empire infantry.





# French 18<sup>e</sup> de Ligne, 1809



The 1806 shako, of black felt reinforced with leather bands and chevrons, has a yellow metal diamond-shaped plate stamped with the Imperial eagle over a voided regimental number. The tri-colour cockade is painted leather; the white cords of fusilier companies end in double raquettes. Note adjustable headband buckled at rear. The hair was generally cut short after c. 1805 but individuals retained the queue.



A fairly common campaign alternative to the white-lapelled habit was the habit-surtout, single-breasted and often plainer in its details. This example is in Imperial blue cloth, closed by nine brass front buttons bearing the regimental number. The scarlet collar, lined white and piped blue, closes by hooks and eyes. The round scarlet cuffs have the first of the two buttons left undone against regulation, but common. The plain blue shoulderstraps are buttoned close to the collar. The plain blue turnbacks bear red star ornaments — more typical of grenadiers; fusiliers commonly wore blue stars on the usual white turnbacks, but again, variation between units was wide. He wears the sergeant's red-backed gold stripes on his forearms.

The white waistcoat has brass buttons, as do the black cloth gaiters confining the white trousers.

The cartridge-box of blackened cow leather has no flap ornament, on campaign it is fitted with a white cover with a painted regimental number — battalion and company details were also often painted here. Two straps under the box secure the forage cap, and one lateral strap engages a rolled leather button on the sabre crossbelt to hold the equipment steady. The sabre-briquet is the An XI model, in a brass-furnished, blackened leather scabbard frogged to the belt.

(Right, top & bottom)

A convincing impression of the campaign pacquetage: cowhide knapsack with spare clothes, supporting rolled uniform coat, tools, spare shoes, a wooden mess dish, and a tinned tankard. Over his haversack hangs a gourd, and a bunch of onions.

Mother Hulotte', the vivandière of the 18<sup>e</sup>, is dressed in costume copied from a period engraving.





Right:

Sergeant-major of Line infantry, here with the 'Eagle' of the 12<sup>e</sup> de Ligne in a print after P & H. Lecomte. This typical uniform of c. 1809 includes the regulation white-lapelled habit with gold-on-red double rank bars on the forearms and a matching service chevron on the left upper sleeve.



restricted officially to grandiers, NCOs and musicians. Although *voligeurs* were ordered to cease carrying sabres in October 1807, this order apparently had limited effect, and many *voligeurs* continued to carry the sabre throughout. The sword-knot was red for grenadiers, white for fusiliers, and green and/or yellow for *voligeurs* (but some regimental variations existed); it had gold intermixing for senior NCOs. The musket was based on the 1777 pattern, modified slightly to produce the *An IX/XIII* pattern, a smoothbore flintlock with iron fittings, buff-leather sling, a length of 151.5cm., 17.5mm. calibre, and weighing 4.375kg. *Voligeurs* were often armed with the dragoon musket, 141.7cm. long and 4.275kg. in weight, which was regarded as more manageable for their skirmishing duties.

#### The 'head of the column'

One of the most obvious methods of asserting regimental individuality was in the uniform of the *tête de colonne*, the musicians and *sapeurs*, who often wore very distinctive uniform. This was especially true for the 18th, whose musicians c. 1805 wore dark blue coats with scarlet collars; sky-blue lapels, cuffs, turnbacks, lining and pocket-piping; and orange-yellow lace edging to the facings. Elite company musicians wore their respective epaulettes, but those of fusilier companies had sky-blue shoulder-straps and 'swallows'-nest' style wings, edged orange-yellow. The band wore gold lace and trefoil epaulettes, and officer-style boots. Head-dress ornaments were like those of their respective companies, with the band having the white plume indicative of regimental staff, and the drum-major and drum-corporal having tri-coloured plumes, white with red top and blue base. By about

1809 this uniform had changed to blue with crimson collar, lapels, cuffs and turnbacks, and mixed red/white/blue lace (gold lace for the band, shown by the Carl Colln. with gold-laced Hessian boots).

The *sapeurs*, who had previously worn a uniform coloured like that of the ordinary grenadiers, are shown to have adopted a most spectacular costume, of sky-blue with crimson facings and white piping and epaulettes.

#### References

The basic uniform-changes affecting the French infantry may be found in *Guide à l'usage des Artistes et Costumiers... Uniformes de l'armée française* (H. Malibran, Paris 1904, reprinted Krefeld 1972). The illustrations prepared under the aegis of Cdt. E.-L. Bucquoy are especially useful, those of the 18th Regt. reproducing material from the Carl, Würtz and Boeswilwald collections, and have been reproduced in *Les Uniformes du Premier Empire: L'Infanterie* (ed. L.-Y. Bucquoy & G. Devautour, Paris 1979). *Aigles et Shukos du Premier Empire* (C. Blondieau, Paris 1980) is a good coverage of head-dress and insignia. *Napoleon's Line Infantry* (P. J. Haythornthwaite, Osprey Men-at-Arms 141, London 1983) is also of use



# US Marine Camouflage Uniforms, 1942-45 (3)

JIM MORAN

Part 1 of this article ('*MF*' No. 32) described and illustrated US Marine use of the US Army one-piece camouflage coveralls in 1942-43; and the introduction of the first pattern USMC two-piece camouflage uniform. Part 2 ('*MF*' No. 33); described and illustrated the second pattern two-piece camouflage uniform, and US Marine camouflage helmet covers; and the first pattern, uncamoouflaged, US Marine parachutist's smock. This concluding part covers the second, third, and 'fourth' patterns of camouflaged USMC parachutist's smocks; and the US Marine parachutist's two-piece camouflage uniform.

## SECOND PATTERN JUMP SMOCK

During late 1942 or very early in 1943, with the onset of the use of camouflage clothing by other specialist units, the plain sage-green 'smock, parachu-

tist, HBT' used in training since late 1941 was dropped in favour of a camouflage version.

Painting of US Marine parachutist wearing the first pattern (uncamoouflaged) jump smock with parachute harness. (US National Archives)





The 'smock, parachutist, HBT, camouflage' was used mainly or entirely in training; the author has been unable to find photographic evidence for its use in combat in the Pacific.

The second pattern jump smock (or 'first pattern camouflage jump smock') was again of 'step-in' design, inspired originally by the German Fallschirmjäger pattern. It was intended to be worn with either the 'utility uniform, HBT, sage-green' — i.e. the standard olive-drab Marine dungarees — or with the trousers of the first pattern two-piece camouflage uniform ('utility uniform, HBT, camouflage') then being issued to the Marine Raider Battalions.

The smock was once again reversible, printed in the familiar patterns of 'greens' and 'browns', the 'greens' being normally worn outermost. It retained the horsehide impact pads on the elbows as used on the first, uncamoouflaged pattern of smock; but these were now sewn internally, with no evident cross-stitching. There was no cuff adjustment to the sleeves, the cuffs being fastened by a single glove-snap. The full-length frontal closure was fastened by six plain black glove-snaps spaced between throat and crutch. Positioned on the front of the two short integral legs were two large pockets across the full width of the leg; horizontal slash openings, which also gave through access to the trouser pockets beneath, were covered by large point-

ed flaps fastened by three glove-snaps. An upper pair of pockets, again internally hung, were positioned on each side of the chest; access was through slash openings set at 30° to the vertical, angled upwards and outwards, each covered by a pointed flap again fastened by three glove-snaps. (There appears to be a suggestion in the vestigial documentary records that the chest pocket layout of the first, uncamoouflaged smock was inconvenient due to the position of the chest-mounted reserve parachute pack.)

In the rear of the smock was a large internal cargo pocket placed centrally. This was

accessed from both left and right; at each end was a zip-fastened opening 10in. long, set at an angle of 50° to the vertical, angled upwards and inwards, covered by a pointed flap fastened by three glove-snaps.

### THIRD PATTERN JUMP SMOCK

The complex pocket design of the second pattern jump smock made it costly to produce; and before long it was decided to simplify the details. The 'smock, parachutist,

HBT, camouflage (modified)' which appeared in the summer or early autumn of 1943 was of the same basic outline as the previous model; it retained the reversible camouflage patterns in 'greens' and 'browns', and

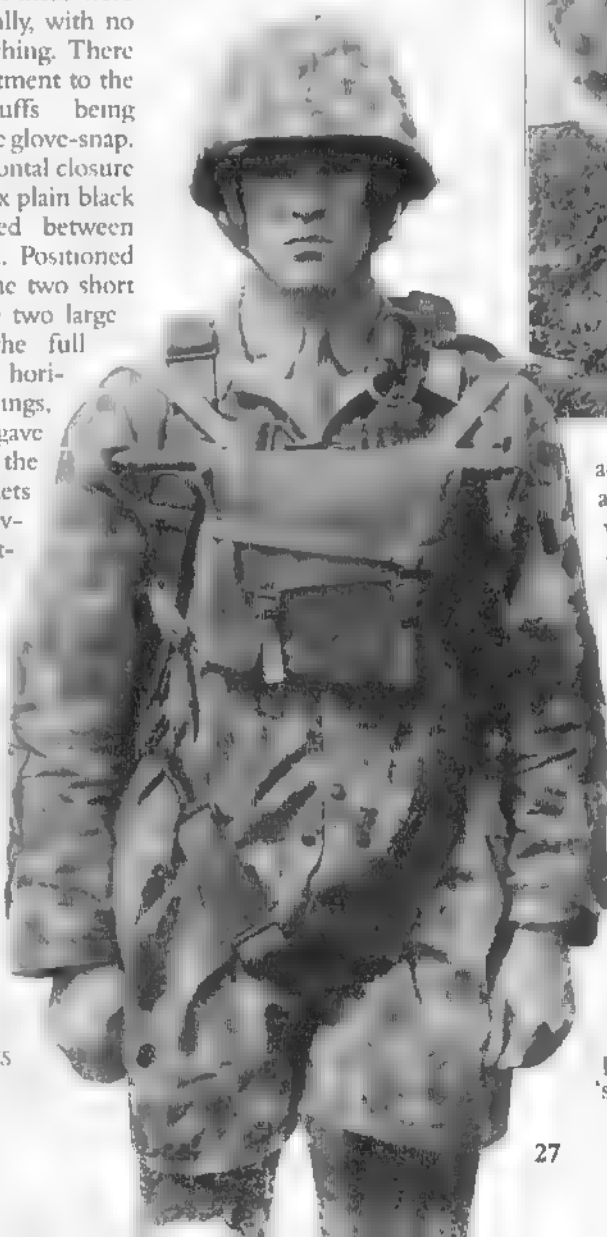
#### Captions to colour photographs overleaf:

- (A) Second pattern Marine parachutist's jump smock, front, note pocket details
- (B) Second pattern parachutist's jump smock, rear, note access to rear 'poacher's' pocket
- (C) Third pattern parachutist's jump smock, front; note modified pockets
- (D) Jacket of Marine parachutist's two-piece camouflage uniform, front greens out
- (E) Parachutist's two-piece camouflage uniform jacket, 'browns out', note that chest pockets now become bellows patch type

San Diego, February 1943 US Marine paratrooper Pfc. Kenneth Kleist poses wearing the second pattern parachutist's smock, with M1C helmet, trousers from the first pattern two-piece camouflage uniform, and an M55 Reising sub-machine gun. The slanted chest pocket flaps can just be seen (US National Archives)



New River, North Carolina, October 1943 US Marine paratrooper wearing the third pattern jump smock ('smock, parachutist, HBT camouflage, modified') identified by the central snap fasteners of the lower pockets each side of the snap-fastened front closure, and by the external elbow pads covered with camouflage material. The chest pack contains a US Navy MAB radio note 'skull cap headphone rig worn under the helmet' (US National Archives)

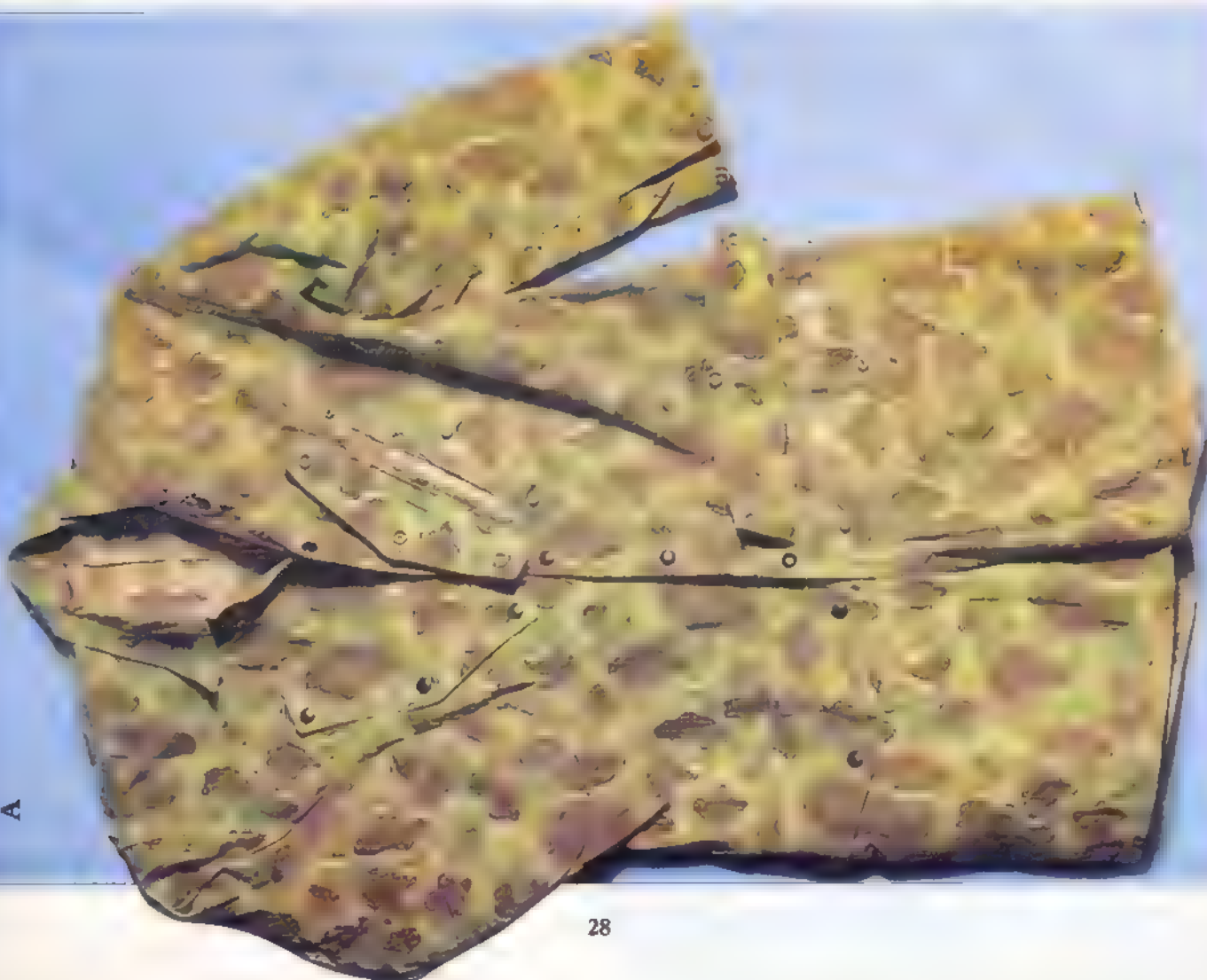




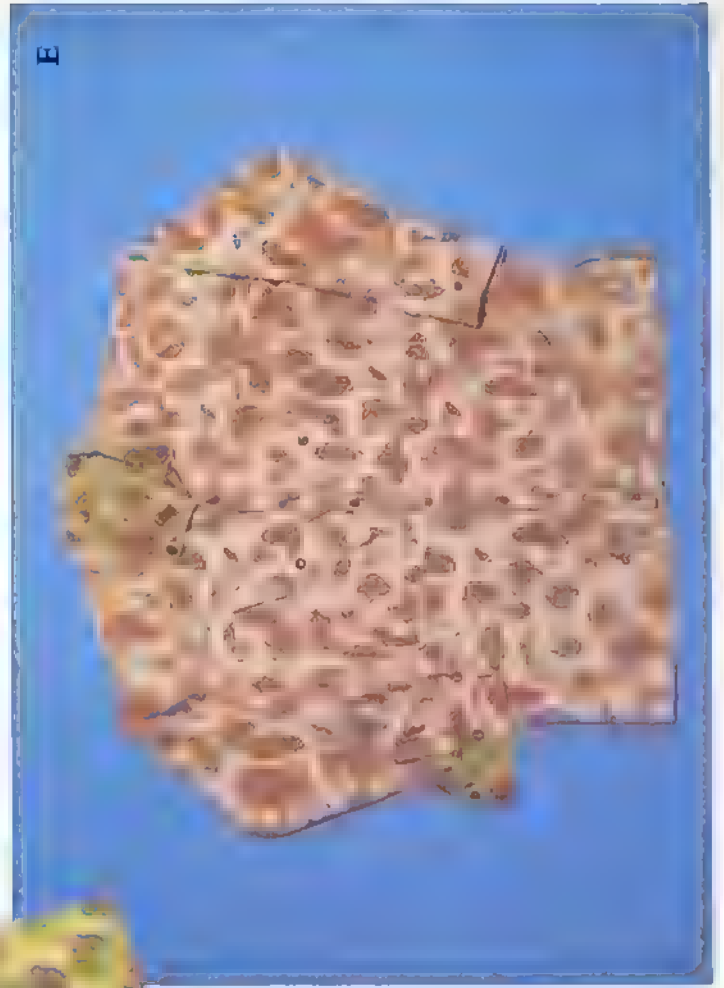
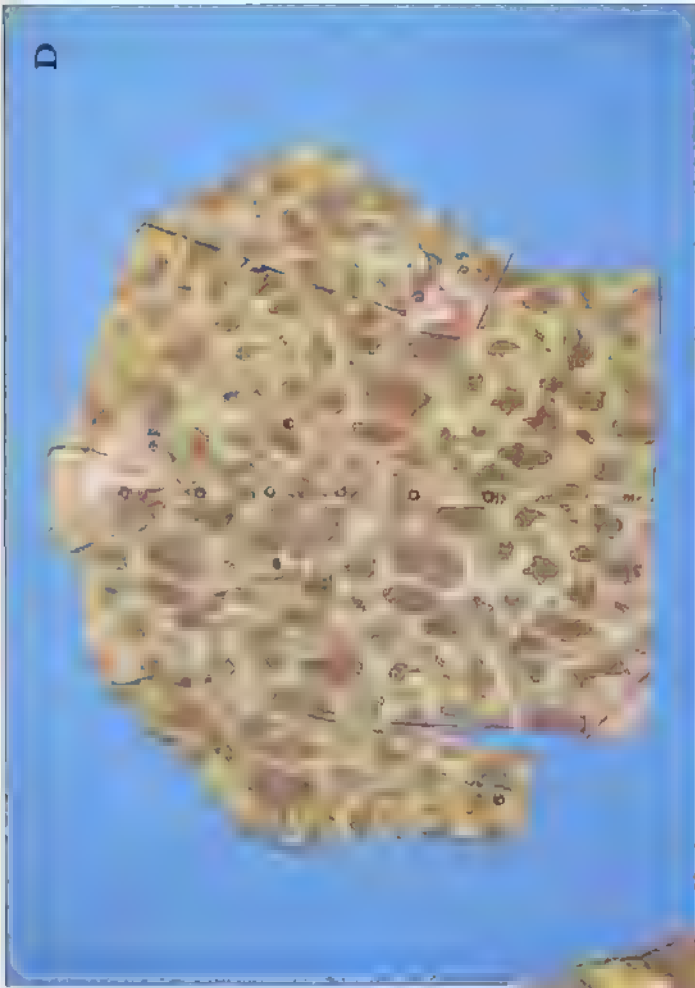
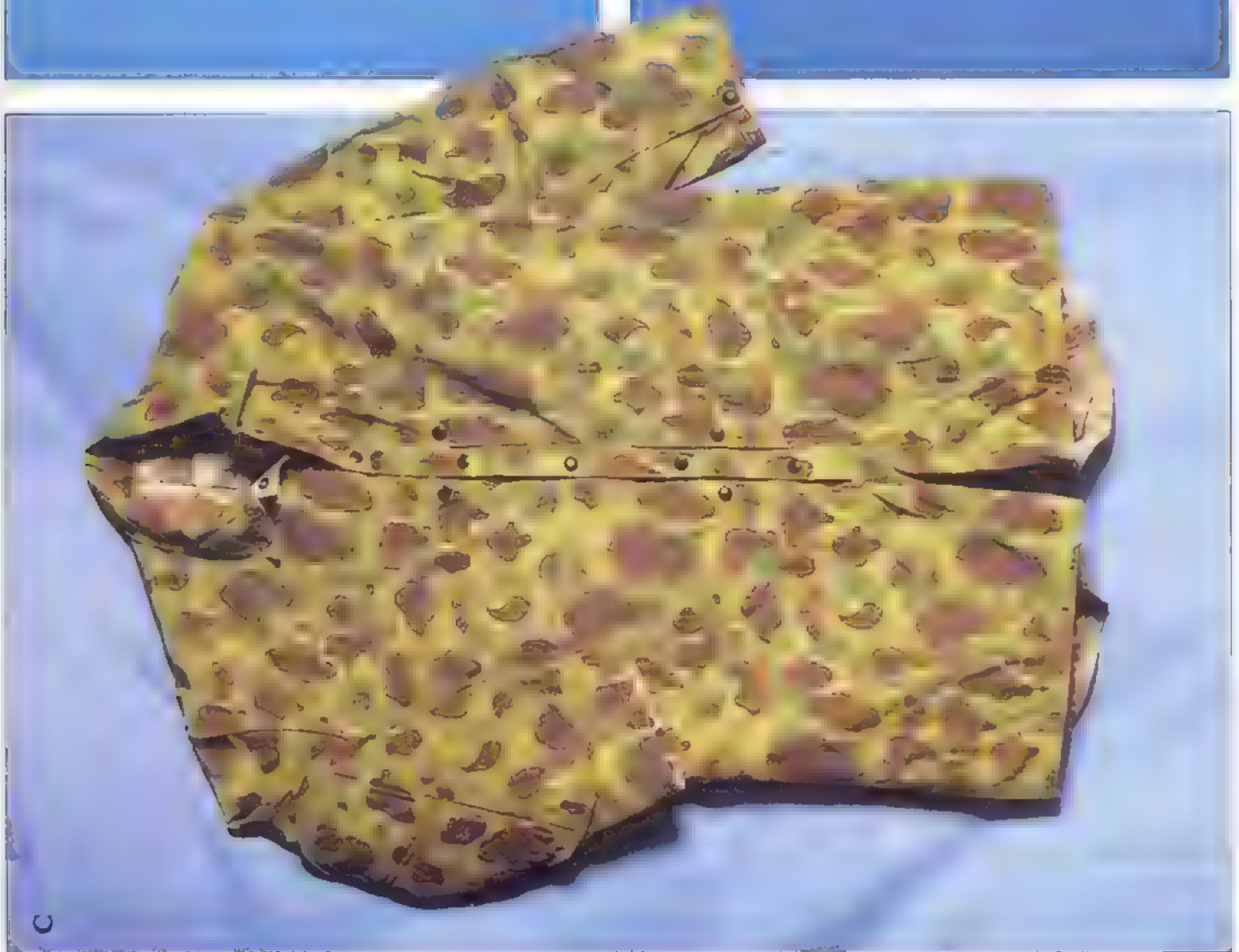
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A





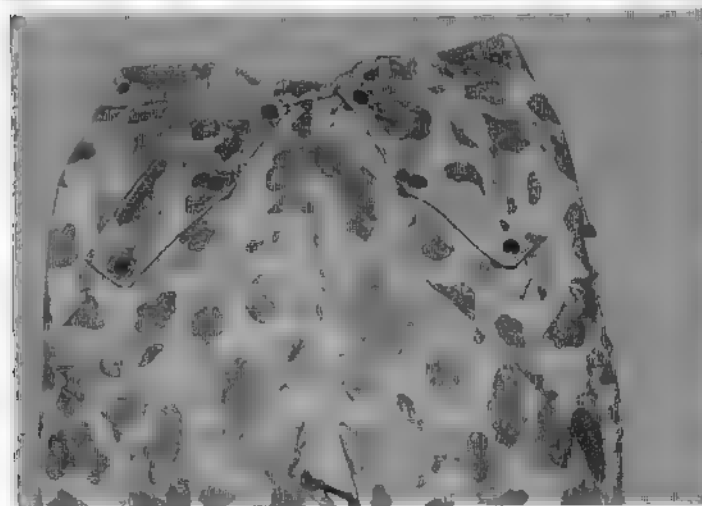
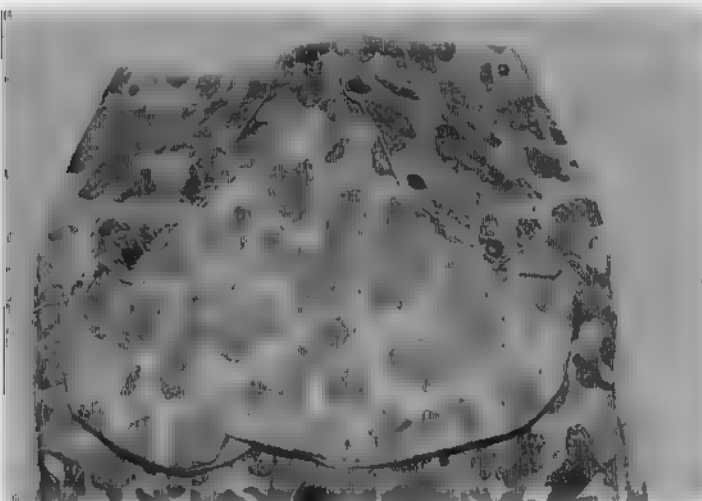




the short step-in legs; and the frontal fastening was again by six plain black glove-snaps spaced between throat and crutch. The elbow pads were this time sewn and cross-stitched to the outside of the sleeves, the horsehide being covered with camouflage material

The pocket layout on the chest of the smock resembled that of the second pattern USMC two-piece camouflage uniform (see 'MP' No. 33, pp 9 & 12). There were four internally hung pockets, however, two at chest and two at waist level. Access to all four was by vertical slash openings set closely on each side of the smock's frontal closure, the top pair between the level of the second and fourth glove-snaps, the lower pair between the fourth and sixth. Each opening was secured by a single centrally placed black glove-snap, these

*Rear pocket, trousers of Paramarine two-piece camouflage uniform; the 'butt pocket' hung externally on the 'greens' side, internally on the 'browns' side with slanted flaps on both sides*



*Pocket arrangement, front of trousers. Paramarine two-piece camouflage uniform (A) 'greens' side, (B) 'browns' side*

being placed just above the third and just below the fifth of the front closure fasteners.

A large internal cargo pocket ran the full width of the rear of the smock from left to right seam. Access was by vertical openings set in each seam, secured by 10in. zip-fasteners and covered by vertical rectangular flaps each fastened with three black glove-snaps.

Again, evidence as to the use of this pattern of smock in the field is lacking.

#### **'Fourth pattern' jump smock**

With the disbandment of the Marine Parachute Battalions in

December 1943, the Marine Corps was left with a large stock of camouflage jump smocks on its hands. The age-old military principle of using up existing material before issuing any new stocks is particularly prevalent in the US Marine Corps; and thus appeared the so-called 'fourth pattern smock' — an obvious misnomer, since it was never issued to Marine parachutists. (Once again, as with the third pattern jump smock, the documents in Quartermaster Record Group 127 in the US National Archives — relevant to USMC records — make no direct reference.)

This 'fourth pattern' was simply the third pattern cut down. The step-in legs were removed, the smock being cut short into a conventional jacket just below the level of the sixth front closure glove-snap. The elbow pads were also removed. In all other respects the smock was unaltered from the third pattern. It was first issued in conjunction with the trousers of the USMC first pattern two-piece camouflage uniform; and later, in Korea and Vietnam, with the 1944 trousers of the second pattern two-piece uniform

#### **MARINE PARACHUTIST'S TWO-PIECE CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORM**

Perhaps the rarest and least-documented of the USMC camouflage uniforms is a two-piece combat suit specifically produced for the Paramarines. It appears to have been ordered during the period when the Paramarines were training with the first pattern sage-green jump smock, and foresaw the

#### **Battle Honours of the US Marine Parachute Units**

*1st Parachute Regiment*  
Vella Lavella Occupation,  
4-16 Oct. 1943  
Choiseul Island Diversion,  
28 Oct.-4 Nov. 1943  
Occupation and Defense  
of Cape Torokina,  
4-15 Dec. 1943  
Consolidation of  
Northern Solomons,  
15 Dec. 1943 - 12 Jan. 1944

*1st Parachute Battalion*  
Guadalcanal-Tulagi  
Landings, 7-9 Aug. 1942  
Capture and Defense of  
Guadalcanal, 10 Aug.-  
18 Sept. 1942  
Vella Lavella Occupation,  
4-16 Oct. 1945  
Occupation and Defense  
of Cape Torokina,  
23 Nov.-15 Dec. 1943  
Consolidation of  
Northern Solomons,  
15 Dec. 1943-12 Jan. 1944  
*Presidential Unit Citation*  
(attached to 1st Marine  
Division): Solomon  
Islands, 7 Aug.-18 Sept.  
1942

*2nd Parachute Battalion*  
Vella Lavella Occupation,  
1 Sept.-16 Oct. 1943  
Choiseul Island Diversion,  
28 Oct.-4 Nov. 1943

*3rd Parachute Battalion*  
Vella Lavella Occupation,  
7-16 Oct. 1943  
Occupation and Defense  
of Cape Torokina,  
4-15 Dec. 1943  
Consolidation of  
Northern Solomons,  
15 Dec. 1943-12 Jan. 1944

*4th Parachute Battalion*  
None — in training status  
until disbanded.

The Parachute Battalions were disbanded and reformed as the nucleus of the 5th Marine Division, the reorganisation being effective as from 29 February 1944.





need for a camouflage combat uniform to be worn under it for operations in the Pacific. Its introduction seems to have coincided with that of the second pattern jump smock; even though this latter was camouflaged, it seems that it may have been intended to be discarded on the drop zone.

The design was a loose-fitting, reversible, shirt-type jacket; the front closure fastened with six plain black glove-snaps.

*The 'fourth pattern' jump smock, simply a cut-down third pattern, as issued to infantry after the disbandment of the Paratrooper units. This is one of several variations later seen in use by French paratroopers during the Indochina War of 1946-54.*



the opened cuffs with a single snap; and there were short vents at the bottom of each side seam. There were two breast pockets, internally hung, so that when the jacket was worn 'browns out' they appeared as bellows patch pockets. On both 'greens' and 'browns' sides of the jacket they were accessed through slash openings set at approximately 30° to the vertical, angled upwards and outwards, and covered by pointed flaps secured by single central glove-snaps.

The trousers of this suit were reversible, with plain cuffs, and a front fly fastened by five exposed black glove-snaps. Belt loops were provided on both

*Left & right: Rear view, and details, of the third pattern jump smock*

'greens' and 'browns' sides, as were metal eyelets for the direct attachment of the basic webbing load suspenders. At the front of the hips were two internally hung pockets accessed, on the 'greens' side, by slash openings at a 45° angle outwards and downwards. When the trousers were worn 'browns out' these appeared as patch pockets, with the openings covered by angled pointed flaps fastened by three black glove-snaps.

Across the rear of the trousers was a single large cargo or 'butt' pocket; this hung externally when worn 'greens out', internally when worn 'browns out'. Access from both 'greens' and 'browns' sides was by two openings set at 45° to the vertical, angled downwards and outwards from a point just below and outside the rear central pair of belt loops, each covered on both sides by a pointed flap secured by three black glove-snaps.

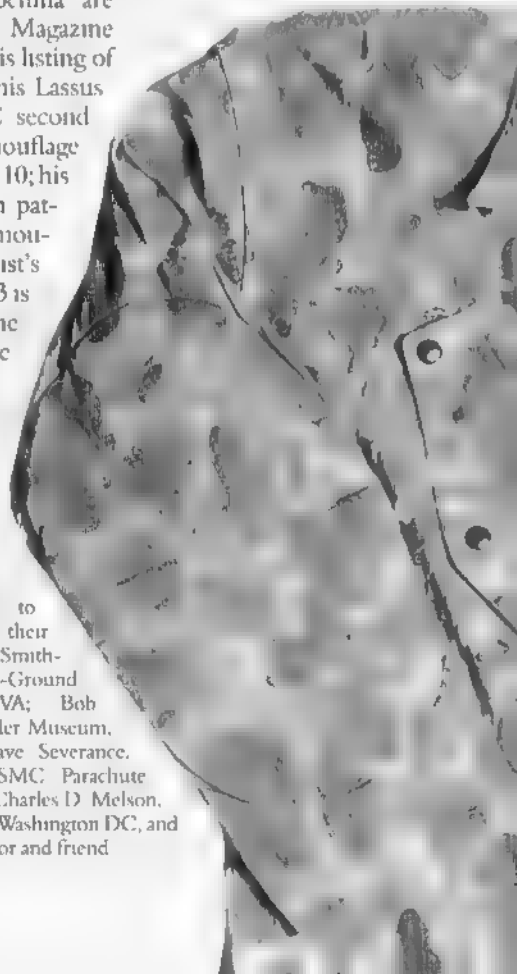
These trousers are similar at first glance to those of the 1944 second pattern two-piece camouflage uniform (cf. photos in Part 2, 'MI' No. 33) and are often mistaken for them. It seems obvious that the latter were modelled after the Paratrooper trousers.

(Readers interested in the post-1945 use of USMC camouflage uniforms by French airborne units in Indochina are referred to *Militaria Magazine* No. 6, pp. 42-48. In his listing of US items issued, Denis Lassus refers to the USMC second pattern two-piece camouflage uniform jacket as item 10; his item 11 is the 'fourth pattern' cut-down camouflage parachutist's smock; and his item 13 is the jacket of the Paratrooper two-piece camouflage uniform. Colour photos of the first and second of these displayed on dummies are found on p. 45.) **MI**

#### Acknowledgements:

The author would like to record his gratitude for their patient assistance to Ken Smith-Christinas, USMC Air-Ground Museum, Quantico, VA; Bob Buerlein, US Marine Raider Museum, Richmond, VA; Col. Dave Severance, Assoc. of Survivors, USMC Parachute Units, World War 2, Maj Charles D. Melson, USMC Historical Center, Washington DC, and Doug Bailey, fellow collector and friend.

*Below: Chest pocket and sleeve details of the second pattern jump smock*





# The Vietnam War on the Screen (2)

STEPHEN J. GREENHILL

Part 1 of this article ('MI' No. 34) covered the feature films dealing with the Vietnam War from the first low-budget B-movies of the mid-1960s to the release of *Hamburger Hill*.

The film *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) was Stanley Kubrick's long-awaited contribution to the genre. It was based on Gustav Hasford's slim novel *The Short Timers*, about the experiences of a group of US Marine recruits from Boot Camp to battlefield. The film opens in the United States Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, South Carolina. Gunnery Sergeant Hartman (played by Vietnam veteran Lee Erney) puts his new recruits through a gruelling eight-week training course, humiliating them with his own particular brand of harassment and foul-mouthed abuse. Private 'Joker'

(Matthew Modine), the camp comedian, learns how to survive; but the overweight Private Lawrence (Vincent D'Onofrio) is pushed beyond breaking point to murder and suicide.

With training completed, 'Joker' is despatched to Vietnam as a reporter for the *Stars and Stripes* service magazine, accompanied by Rafterman, a novice photographer. During the 1968 Tet Offensive they accompany the 'Lusthog Squad' of the 1st Platoon, H Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment on patrol in the ruins of Hue. The main Communist forces have retreated to the far side of the

Perfume River, but the squad is pinned down by sniper fire. After sustaining several casualties, and expending vast quantities of ammunition, the survivors finally kill the lone sniper, who turns out to be a young girl.

Kubrick chose to make the film in Britain: the Parris Island sequences were shot in Norfolk, while the ruins of Hue were recreated on a gas-works demolition site in London's East End. In spite of Kubrick's meticulous attention to detail the film has a curiously artificial quality, and suffers from a dramatic discontinuity made inevitable by having only two main characters in both halves of the film. Nonetheless, right from the opening images of recruits having their hair shorn like so many sheep, the film remains a powerful statement on the dehumanising effect of war.

The public response to these last three films — *Platoon*, *Hamburger Hill*, and *Full Metal Jacket* — proved to be crucial in promoting films from other

genres using Vietnam as a theme. Military values were satirised in Barry Levinson's *Good Morning, Vietnam* (1988), which starred the comedian Robin Williams as an Armed Forces Radio disc-jockey whose maniacally irreverent style delights his listeners, if not his superiors. Walter Hill's *Saigon* (1988) was basically a detective story set in Vietnam, and Francis Ford Coppola's *Gardens of Stone* (1987) was based on Nicholas Proffitt's novel about soldiers on ceremonial duty at Arlington National Cemetery at the height of the war. Lionel Chetwynd's *Hanoi Hilton* (1988) was a sincere attempt to deal with the experiences of American prisoners in Hanoi's notorious Hao Lo prison.

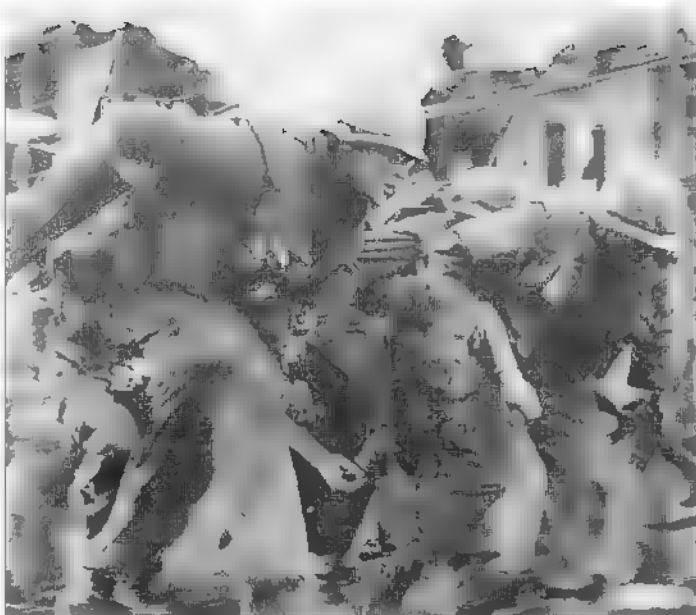
*The extraordinary performance of an inexperienced actor, Lee Erney, as the SDI Gunnery Sergeant Hartman was one of the revelations of Full Metal Jacket (1987). Cinema legend has it that this Vietnam veteran was originally hired simply as a technical advisor, and that after seeing him in action Kubrick offered him the on-screen role*



Peter Markle's *BAT\*21* (1988) was based on the book of the same title by William C. Anderson. It simplified the story of electronic countermeasures expert Lt.Col. Icaal Hambleton, who was shot down just south of the de-militarized zone while on a reconnaissance mission during the Easter 1972 North Vietnamese offensive. Anderson's book was basically true, although some events were altered to simplify the narrative or protect classified escape and evasion procedures. In the film, Hambleton (Gene Hackman), using code-name 'BAT\*21', quickly establishes radio contact with spotter pilot Capt. Bartholomew 'Birdog' Clark (Danny Glover), but an immediate rescue is precluded by the proximity of enemy troops. Aware that the vicinity is soon to be subjected to carpet bombing, he decides to escape on foot, his route communicated to 'Birdog' using an improvised code based on golfing terminology. Bursts of action were alternated with scenes portraying the developing relationship between Hambleton and Clark, although the pair do not meet until the climax. The result was a well-made traditional war movie which eschewed both heavily emphasised messages and false heroics, and held the attention.

#### Platoon Leader

Aaron Norris's *Platoon Leader* (1988) was based on James McDonough's book about his experiences as a lieutenant in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, 'the Herd', in 1970. For much of his tour of duty McDonough commanded 2nd Platoon, Bravo Company, 4th Bn., 503rd Infantry (Airborne) in an outpost which guarded the village of Truong Lam in Tam Quon district, Binh Dinh province. The outpost was an isolated symbol of government control in a predominantly Viet Cong-controlled province, and was thus subjected to constant harassment and full scale attacks. In an unusually frank narrative McDonough related the problems of command, freely admitting his successes and failures.



The squad drag a casualty out of the line of fire when pinned down by a single intelligent and merciless sniper in the streets of Hue — recreated for *Full Metal Jacket* on a huge industrial demolition site in Beckton, London. Some extras for combat scenes were provided by members of a British Territorial Parachute Battalion. Gossip at the time indicated that the Paras had to be told repeatedly that their personal views on tactical fire-and-movement were not required.

In the film the central character, played by Michael Dudikoff, was re-named Jeff Knight. It begins with him being flown in to take command from a predecessor whose inaction had lost him the respect of his command. With help from veteran Sgt. Michael McNamara (Robert F. Lyons) he restores discipline and improves the outpost's defences. Patrols are sent out to discover the intentions of the Viet Cong, who are massing for full-scale attack. The film failed to convey the most interesting aspects of the book, namely the internal stresses experienced by a man whose decisions can mean life or death for those for whose lives he is responsible. The result was an unfortunately clichéd plot which relied on a series of rapidly escalating action sequences for its effect. This emphasis was not surprising, given that Aaron Norris had previously directed his brother Chuck in the third *Missing in Action* film. However, Michael Dudikoff played the lead role with conviction, and the South African locations stood in well enough for Vietnam.

#### The Iron Triangle

Recent films about Vietnam

##### Centre:

Matthew Modine as 'Joker', the Marine reporter on *Stars & Stripes* who is sucked into a terrifying patrol action in Hue during the Tet '68 fighting by an encounter with his old Parris Island buddies in *Full Metal Jacket*.

##### Left:

Robin Williams, the popular comedian, provided some hilarious moments as the USAF DJ in *Good Morning, Vietnam* (1988): as a comment on the war itself the film tended toward sentimentality. The use of encounters between soldiers and winsome war-orphans may now be considered a film cliché in desperate need of replacement by some more original image.





Michael Dudikoff as Lt. Jeff Knight in *Platoon Leader* (1988), based on James McDonough's autobiographical book about his experiences with the 173rd Abn Bde - 'the Herd' - in 1970

have, with some justification, been criticised for their failure to portray the enemy other than as sadistic tormentors or nameless, faceless shadows. This is doubtless due to traditional Western prejudices against Asian ethnic groups, and to the fact that war films traditionally rely on familiar stereotypes generated during times of hostility. Hence, Eric Weston's *The Iron Triangle* (1989), with its story of a developing mutual respect between an American officer and a Viet Cong soldier, was arguably the first film to present points of view from both sides. The *Iron Triangle* was the notorious Viet Cong-controlled area about 20 miles north-west of Saigon which formed the southernmost end of the Ho Chi Minh Trail: it thus became the focus of several major American operations. The film is set in 1969, when

the war was at its height. The story has some basis in truth, being inspired by the captured diary of a dead Viet Cong soldier.

The central character is a 17-year-old Viet Cong soldier called Ho (Liem Whatley). Tensions are developing between Ho and an unpopular Communist Party official called Khoi (James Ishida), although Ho is to some extent protected by the understanding Capt. Tuong (Haing Ngor). Their common enemy comprises a variety of Americans, French and South Vietnamese. Beau Bridges plays Capt. Keene, an idealistic American infantry officer, whose main aim is to keep as many of his men alive as possible. He is appalled when two Viet Cong captives he has brought in are

*The cautious sweep through a 'ville' here in *Platoon Leader*, has inevitably become a repetitious sequence in Vietnam movies just as the actual experience was for the GIs. Oliver Stone's *Platoon* sequence probably remains the ultimate statement on this particular nervous ordeal*



Beau Bridges as Capt. Keene in Eric Weston's *The Iron Triangle* (1989), a film whose interest lay largely in its attempt to show a Viet Cong guerrilla as an individual personality rather than a faceless stereotype

summarily executed by an ARVN officer, Capt. Duc (Francois Chau). Keene's reaction is not shared by Jacques (Johnny Hallyday), a French mercenary who is happy to see the Vietnamese kill each other off. Jacques has been hired to protect Khan Ly (Ilana B'tiste), a beautiful South Vietnamese propaganda expert who is visiting villages in the area — the presence of these characters representing the depressing tendency of Hollywood to force anachronistic melodrama into historical backgrounds.

Ho proves adept in battle: he successfully carries out a mission to assassinate Khan Ly, and captures Keene during the ambush of an American patrol. When the jealous Khoi attempts to take the credit for himself, Ho decides to take Keene back to Tuong alone. Thus begins a relationship between captor and captive, and the growth of a mutual understanding. When Khoi intervenes Keene kills him and manages to escape, but it is Keene's and Ho's destiny to meet again on the battlefield.

The film well contrasts the different methods of waging war. The Americans clearly have superior firepower, being able to call in helicopter gunships and air support when the situation demands it. In contrast, the Viet Cong rely on picking up any useful weapon left by their enemies. We see concealed camps in jungle clearings, submerged bridges crossing rivers, tunnel systems, snipers and booby-traps. More importantly, we see how they can slip into a South Vietnamese village and pass themselves off as local peasants. No attempt is made to identify the units to which the protagonists belong, nor to indicate the scale of the operations that took place in the Iron Triangle. It may not have been the most satisfying film of the Vietnam genre, but it was interesting in moving away from stereotypes



in the direction of reconciliation.

### CASUALTIES

Brian De Palma's *Casualties of War* (1989) was based on a true incident described in Daniel Lang's book of the same title, originally published in *The New Yorker* in 1969. At the beginning, the sight on the subway of a Vietnamese girl triggers bad memories for Eriksson (Michael J. Fox). He recalls a terrifying night skirmish soon after his arrival in Vietnam, while he was still the squad's 'cherry'. During the fighting he becomes stuck in a caved-in

Capt. Tuong, a sympathetic VC officer, was played in *The Iron Triangle* by Haing Ngor. Given this actor's personal history as a bereaved refugee from the Khmer Rouge, and his powerful screen debut playing such a refugee in Joffe's *The Killing Fields*, this was thought-provoking casting







Eriksson (Michael J Fox) and Oahn (Thuy Thu Le) the doomed captive girl in *Casualties of War* (1989). Brian De Palma's big-budget examination of the moral dilemma of a soldier forced to choose between loyalty to his comrades and the demands of common humanity

Viet Cong tunnel, but is pulled to safety by his tough and experienced squad sergeant Meserve (Sean Penn). Soon afterwards Brown, the squad's popular black radio operator, a 'short-timer', is killed by a sniper in an apparently peaceful village. The anger and frustration building up inside Meserve come to a head when he, along with squad members Hatcher and Clark, are prevented from visiting a village whore-house near base. Believing all Vietnamese to be Viet Cong sympathisers, Meserve hatches an appalling plan to kidnap and gang-rape a

Vietnamese girl while on long-range patrol.

Oahn (Thuy Thu Le) is taken at night despite her family's protests. Clark and Hatcher need no encouragement to obey their sergeant, and the vacillating Diaz is too afraid to support Eriksson's protests. By failing to take the one opportunity to release the girl, Eriksson is helpless to prevent her eventual murder. He decides to inform his superiors, only to encounter indifference, threats, and an attempt on his own life. Help eventually comes through an Army chaplain, leading to the

playwright whose acclaimed play *Streamers* was also about Vietnam. The dramatic thrust of the film was the moral dilemma: when do ethical considerations overrule loyalty to your unit or to the man who saved your life? Underlying this was a clear allegory concerning American presence in SE Asia at that time. The film was shot in Thailand close to the location used for *Good Morning, Vietnam*. The popular stars and consequent large budget enabled the construction of 'Wolf Camp', a 30-acre fully-functioning Army base consisting of barracks, bunkers, towers, latrines, mess-halls, recreation centres and a hilltop hospital.

*Casualties of War* succeeded in dramatising the kind of ethical problem that can arise in the field. The optimistic ending, a fleeting contact between Eriksson and the girl on the subway, was contrived, but the film well conveyed how a traumatic experience can result in a 'casualty of war' as much as any physical injury.

In 1989 Oliver Stone returned to the Vietnam theme with an adaptation of Ron Kovic's autobiographical *Born on the Fourth of July*. The making

The 'heavy' role in *Casualties of War* was taken by Sean Penn, playing Sgt Meserve. While the casting of two young actors popular with the 'youth audience' no doubt helped the financing, the film was based on a genuinely autobiographical book by Daniel Lang

of the film began over a decade ago, when Stone and Kovic met to discuss the possibility of collaborating on a screenplay based on Kovic's book. A year and a half later, just four days away from the start of the shoot, financing fell through. However, the huge success of *Platoon* in 1986 enabled Stone to return to the project. *Born on the Fourth of July* is now the second film in Stone's planned trilogy about Vietnam.

Kovic's book starts in 1967 with his wounding during a skirmish near the Cua Viet River while serving as a US Marine sergeant. A bullet wound in the heel is quickly followed by another which shatters his spinal column, leaving him paralysed from the mid-chest down. The book then reprises his childhood in Massapequa, Long Island; and cuts forward to his harrowing experiences in a military hospital in the Bronx, and his subsequent involvement with Vietnam Veterans Against the War. The final chapters return to the period in Vietnam just prior to his wounding and describe actions in which he unwittingly killed Vietnamese civilians, and a corporal in his own squad.

The screenplay restores chronological order to the narrative, wisely omitting a Parris Island training sequence which could have done no more than recall *Full Metal Jacket*, and an abortive love affair with a divorced woman. The climax of the film comes just prior to Kovic addressing a huge audience at the 1976 Democratic Convention.

To play Kovic Stone chose Tom Cruise, an actor whose rapid progression from Hollywood brat-packer to more mature roles made him ideal to play the central character over a number of years. Cruise well conveys a young man motivated by John F. Kennedy's exhortation to 'ask not what your country can do for you...'. His shift in attitude begins as a result of his experiences in the Bronx military hospital. Quadraplegics and paraplegics exist in rat-infested, overcrowded wards, and are neglected for hours by uncaring





*Two moments in the personal odyssey of US Marine Sgt Ron Kovic, whose book attracted the attention of writer/director Oliver Stone some ten years before he finally managed to achieve its production. Kovic was played by Tom Cruise in Stone's *Born On the Fourth of July* (1989)*



Dye, who plays an infantry colonel, put the actors through a gruelling training period in preparation for the film. Although he performed the same function for the cast in *Platoon*, he was careful to maintain the differences of motivation, slang and behaviour that existed between Marine volunteers and drafted 'grunts'.

By refusing to spare his audience the unpleasant medical details, Stone conveyed how the wounding of a young man on the battlefield can have disastrous consequences not only for him, but also for his friends, family and home town. Kovic demonstrably had the talent and determination to make something of his life despite a lifetime confined to a wheelchair: not all in his position have been so fortunate.

#### **The camera's eye**

The portrayal of ground combat in Vietnam reached a new level of realism in Patrick Duncan's film *84 Charlie Mopie* (1988). Duncan was keen to direct a film that would convey the sense of reality of the soldier's experience in Vietnam, possibly using a sustained-take, first-person camera approach.

staff. His alienation is exacerbated by those among his family and former friends who reject the patriotic impulses which led to his volunteering. This lack of support when it is most needed results in a wild trip to Mexico to indulge in whores, drugs and drink.

Memories of *Platoon* are evoked by the decision to cast Tom Berenger as a Marine recruiting sergeant who visits Ron's school, and Willem Dafoe as Charlie, a fellow veteran Kovic befriends in Mexico. However, the two combat sequences, shot in a Philippines coastal region similar to the one in which Kovic served, contrast with the inland jungles seen in the earlier film. Although short compared with the overall length of the film, they convincingly convey the fear, panic and chaos described in the book. Ex-Marine Dale



Since 1984 several contracts to make the picture were signed, but each time the financial backers withdrew because of Duncan's intimate approach to the subject. Help eventually came in the form of Robert Redford, who financed a promotional reel and helped clinch a deal with Columbia that enabled production to commence. The film was shot on a tight 17-day schedule near Magic Mountain just outside Los Angeles, on a minuscule budget of just over \$1,000,000.

The film follows a six-man patrol with men from the 173rd Airborne Brigade assigned to locate enemy build-ups in the Central Highlands. What distinguishes this film from its predecessors is that the action is seen entirely from the point-of-view of a camera wielded by an Army cinematographer who accompanies the patrol while making a training documentary. The cameraman, identified as '84 Charlie Mopic', begins his film by having the members of the patrol introduce themselves. The inexperienced lieutenant, LT (Johnathan Emerson), begins a speech but dries up. The seasoned black Sergeant O'Donovan (Richard Brooks) resents taking a cameraman on patrol. There is evidently enmity between LT and O'Donovan, as the former vainly attempts to assert his authority. The overall plot may be a war-movie cliché, but as Duncan, himself a Vietnam veteran, once told a screening audience, 'Clichés happen to be true'.

In order to remain consistent with the camera's point-of-view the film eschews overhead shots and long-shots. Also absent is the use of pop-music on the soundtrack, with the exception of a Donovan record heard on the squad's radio. The radio is also the medium by which we hear the chilling sounds of a friendly patrol being overrun by the enemy, while the squad listens impotently.

The details are convincing: Pretty Boy (Jason Tomlins) diligently applies foot-powder, alarms are made by suspending tin-cans from wire, and dog-tags are taped into a dead GI's mouth before he is sealed in a

body-bag. The film successfully conveyed a feeling of claustrophobia as the patrol progresses along jungle paths; the ambushes and ensuing panic displayed a documentary realism that surpassed most other comparable films which benefited from much higher budgets.

#### Summary

The full exploration that the war achieved in literature, theatre and poetry has highlighted Hollywood's long reluctance to engage with the issues. Given that films, through theatrical release, television broadcast and video, do much to shape popular perception of important events, it is not surprising that young Americans have been appallingly ignorant about the Vietnam War. A survey carried out in 1985 indicated that many did not know which side America was on. A generation has passed since American Marines first disembarked at Da Nang for most young Americans, the intended audience, Vietnam is just history.

The problems facing filmmakers attempting to portray the war are daunting: the war did not provide the decisive set-piece battles which war-movie conventions traditionally depend upon. It took over ten years after American withdrawal for films to be made which gave a reasonably accurate picture of what it was like to experience the war on the ground, and their scope has been limited. However, films like *Platoon*, and those which have followed it, have done much to convey the nature of ground combat in Vietnam. Audiences are now accustomed to images of helicopter gunships, burning villages, columns of refugees, and sudden ambushes. The success of recent Vietnam films has resulted in the appearance of television series like *Tour of Duty* and *China Beach*, as well as a number of regrettable low-budget exploitation films. However, this is unlikely to be the result of a change in policy in Hollywood to confront contemporary issues, regardless of their unpopularity. The production of films about Vietnam will ultimately depend on their continued success at the box-office.

MM

## BRITISH FORCES IN THE GULF (2)

As explained in 'MI' No.34, p.23, we intend to publish selections of photographs of British troops in the Gulf as and when they reach us, with the eventual aim of offering readers a fully detailed article in our usual style. This month we have chosen photographs of armoured vehicles. We also list below such up-dated notes as are available to Michael Cox at the time of going to press on the orders of battle tables published in 'MI' No.34 last month. We have not the space to repeat the entire tables amended, and these notes should be filed with the original tables from No.34.



**TABLE A: Land Forces**

See Note 3, 'MI' No.34 p.26:

Published data makes it clear that 2 Field Regt. Royal Artillery, the Close Support unit of 4th Armoured Brigade, is in fact a composite unit made up of batteries from each of the three Field Regts. of 3rd Arm'd Div. in BAOR, as follows: 46 (Talavera) Air Defence Bty., and O (The Rocket Troop) Fld. Bty., properly belonging to 2 Fld. Regt.; 23 (Gibraltar 1779-83) Fld. Bty., from 27 Fld. Regt.; and 127 (Dragon) Bty. from 49 Fld. Regt.

#### See Note 4:

It would now appear that the whole of 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers is deployed to the Gulf.

#### Royal Corps of Transport

Most of the RCT assets in the Gulf would appear to be concentrated under 10 Regt. RCT, as follows: RHQ; 9 Sqn. (fuel); 12 Sqn. (ammunition, fuel, water); 17 Sqn. (GS tasks); Troop, 16 Tank Transporter Sqn.; 50 Movement Control

Turret crew of a CVRT Striker, fitted with five Swingfire missiles, probably a vehicle of 16th/5th Lancers, the divisional recon unit. Note under camouflage cover the bulged, cut-out sides of the Rasal CVC helmet fitting over the separate headset; the latter is in dark green plastic with black textured centres. Sponge rubber is usually taped around the boom 'mike' (Crown Copyright/Sgt Andy Mason RAOC)

Sqn.; 52 Port Sqn.; REME Workshop. Another tank transporter unit deployed is 414 TTU.

#### Additional deployments

The following units' deployment to the Gulf for guarding and processing Iraqi POWs has been announced: 1st Bn., Coldstream Guards (a London duties battalion drawn from 56 (London) Bde.); 1st Bn., The King's Own Scottish Borderers (from 52 (Lowland) Bde.); 1st Bn., The Royal Highland Fusiliers (from 54 Infantry Bde.) — all three thus being drawn from brigades which have largely administrative rather than operational

Challenger of commanding officer, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. More recent than the photograph on our March cover, it shows the apparently general repainting of tactical numbers (here '11B') in black rather than white, presumably for better visibility. Note that external stowage has been improvised from 'giant string bags', apparently made from loading net, they are seen on many types of armoured vehicle as is the roll of sand-coloured cloth along the top of the skirt armour. This is unrolled when stationary for any period, as in the Western Desert in World War II, the deep shadows between suspension units are visible from long distances under some light conditions. (Crown Copyright Sgt Andy Mason RAOC)

roles. Men of the 1st Bn., The Devonshire & Dorset Regt. have been deployed to guard the UK-based POW facility at Rolleston Camp; unlike the Gulf-deployed units this battalion forms part of the operational 1st Infantry Brigade.

**TABLE B: Royal Navy & Royal Fleet Auxiliary**  
**See Section A, Note 1:**  
**Armilla Patrol, Group Y-Yankee**

The following departed Portsmouth, Portland and Devonport between 9 and 17 January: D95 Manchester (Type 42 Batch III GM destroyer); D89 Exeter (Type 42 Batch II GM destroyer); F94 Brave (Type 22 Batch II frigate); F90 Brilliant (Type 22 Batch I frigate); followed 23 January by A109 Bayleaf (support tanker), which will relieve Orangeleaf on arrival.

**See Section C: Additional MCMV deployments:**

M29 Brecon (2nd MCM Sqn.), M33 Brocklesby, M36 Bicester (both 4th MCM Sqn.) departed Rosyth 11 February. They will relieve Atherstone, Cattistock and Hurworth in Gulf; Dulverton and Ledbury, which arrived c 19/20 January, will remain on station, maintaining strength of five vessels.

A133 Hecla (survey vessel converted to MCM HQ & Support) departed Devonport

FV432 variant with added stowage racks and 50 cal MG pintle-mounted. The Light Aid Detachment serving with each tank squadron has an ARV tank, an FV434 mounting a crane, and one of these (Crown Copyright/Sgt. Andy Mason RAOC)



January, to relieve Herald in this role; Herald returning to UK for refit due March.

**See Section D:**

All four LSLs were reported present in the Gulf on 4 February.

**Ships deployed to Eastern Mediterranean 'for exercises with Allied navies':**

The MoD stresses these are long-planned deployments; but clearly such vessels would be conveniently placed to reinforce the Gulf should they be required.

**Ark Royal Group**

Departed Portsmouth 9/10 January: RO7 Ark Royal (Invincible Class ASW Carrier: Air Group — 801 Sqn., Sea Harrier FRs.1; 820 Sqn., Sea King HAS.5); F96 Sheffield (Type 22 Batch II frigate). Departed Devonport 10 January: A124 Olmeda (fleet tanker); A486 Regent (fleet replenishment ship). Originally D95 Manchester (see Armilla Patrol note above) was deployed as part of group; departing UK a week before rest of Group Yankee, she was reported due in Gulf 1 February; F75 Charybdis (Leander Class Batch III Seawolf conversion frigate) then replaced Manchester in Ark Royal's Escort Group.

Also deployed to Mediterranean for exercises but not

apparently named for Gulf duties or part of Ark Royal Group was F89 Battleaxe (Type 22 Batch I frigate), departed Devonport during January.

General support for RN/multi-national vessels in transit of Mediterranean is provided by A75 Tidespring (fleet tanker), to be relieved by A111 Oakleaf (support tanker).

**TABLE C-1: Royal Air Force**

**Tornado GR.1 squadrons**

The third Tornado GR.1 squadron, arrived Saudi Arabia 2-4 January, is confirmed as composite squadron based on 9 and 31 Sqn. from RAF Germany. It is based at Dhahran with 12 aircraft plus 6 replacements.

It seems apparent that at least some aircrew from 617 Sqn. are either still present at or have been flown out as reinforcements/replacements to, the unit based at Muharraq, Bahrain.

**Helicopter squadrons**

RAF Pumas and Chinooks in theatre have submerged squadron identities into one large composite Joint Helicopter Support Unit (JHSU) mainly based at Ras al Ghar. Aviation publications suggest that composition is 19 Puma HC.1 and 11 Chinook HC.1, some of each being flown out by USAF transports in November and the remain-

der shipped aboard Atlantic Conveyor, departing 23 December. The helicopters are drawn from 33 and 230 Sqn. (Puma), 7 and 18 Sqn. (Chinook), and 240 OCU (both types).

**Buccaneer deployment**

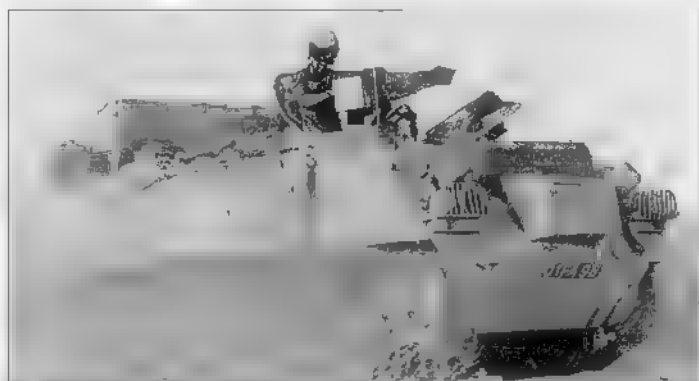
On 24 January it was announced that Buccaneer S 2A/S.2Bs were to be deployed to the Gulf, apparently a composite squadron drawn from 12 and 208 Sqn. at Lossiemouth. The first detachment (6-10 aircraft) were reported operational by 2 February. The deployment of a further 6 aircraft was reported on 8 February to bring the unit to full squadron strength. **MI**

**Captions to colour photographs overlaid:**

(A) Challengers de-truck from Scammell Commander transporters in the Saudi Arabian desert and move off the highway into front-line positions. The tiny dark-blue-on-sand St Andrew's Cross stencil identifying Royal Scots Dragoon Guards is just visible low on right turret cheek of near tank, tactical numbers identify leader of 4 Troop, B Squadron (note repeated in yellow on black plate on rear of turret stowage). Many extra bins have been retro-fitted, including, apparently as standard, the long hull side bin from a Chieftain fitted to the left turret side of Challengers

(B) Warrior, from its tactical marking presumably of HQ, 1st Bn The Staffordshire Regiment. Note the battalion's newly applied insignia on the rear side of the turret: an 'Afrikakorps' palm with the Staffords' knot capbadge replacing the swastika. Immediately behind this is an added Chieftain hull rear bin, and an ammo box is fitted to the turret rear stowage basket. Antennae have adjustable-angle base fittings to avoid bending and tying down. The cluster of narrow tubes below the smoke grenade dischargers are bases for camouflage stanchions.

(C,D,E) For some reason, everybody's favourite the venerable but popular Centurion AVREs of 32nd Armoured Regt., Royal Engineers, with 'dozer blade and 165mm demolition gun, they sometimes tow the 'Giant Viper' trailer for minefield clearance. Note 30 cal MG pintle-mounted on turret. In the head-on shot the sublimely unsuitable tank name 'Fluffy' can be seen on the left of the blade; on the right, the regiment's flash is stencilled in black (detail — see 1.). It is the proud bull's head of the World War II 79th Armoured Division, 'Hobart's Funnies', who performed this and many other roles in the spearhead of the NW Europe campaign. The flash is worn in full colour as a sleeve insignia by some personnel of 32 Armd. Regt. RE. (All photographs Will Fowler)





A



B



C



D



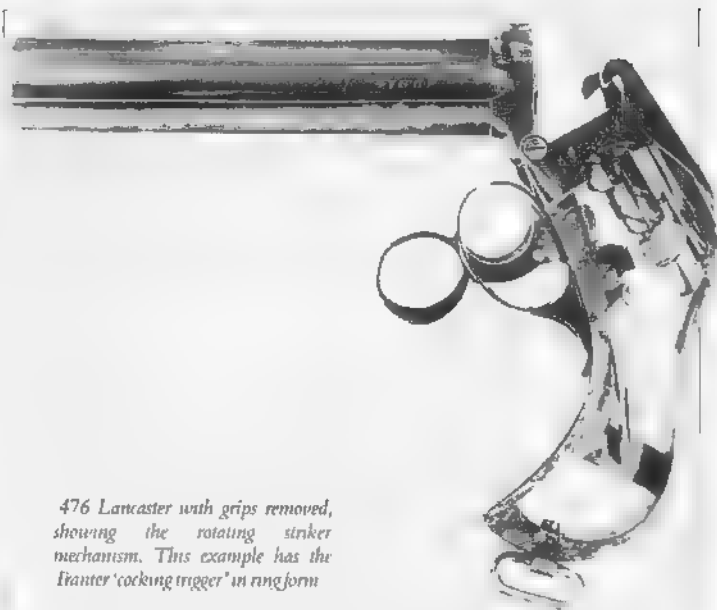
E



# The Lancaster Pistols

JACK BARTLETT

Michael Barthorp's 'Gallery' article on the famous Victorian hero Colonel Fred Burnaby in *'MP'* No.12 mentioned that when he met his heroic end at the hands of Mahdist spearmen on 17 January 1885 at the battle of Abu Klea he was armed both with a sword and with a 'four-barrelled Lancaster pistol'. We are now able to offer readers a clearer view of this intriguing weapon.



476 Lancaster with grips removed, showing the rotating striker mechanism. This example has the trigger 'cocking trigger' in ring form

It is reported that in 1851 officers of the 12th Lancers, kicking their heels in London as they waited to join a troopship for South Africa and the Eighth Kaffir War, visited the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace, where they were attracted by the stand of Col. Samuel Colt. With an eye to favourable publicity and future British sales, Colt withdrew 25 examples of his revolvers from the exhibition showcase, and sold them on the spot to the Lancer officers.

The .36 Navy Colt six-shot percussion revolver (loaded by pouring loose black powder into each individual chamber, ramming a tight-fitting lead bullet on top, and then priming each chamber's nipple with a copper percussion cap) saw service in the Cape, the

Crimea, and the Great Mutiny before the decade was out. But while it was an elegant weapon, and an obvious step forward from single-shot handguns, it was not without drawbacks as a battlefield weapon. The hammer had to be cocked for each individual shot, which was not desirable in a hand-to-hand encounter. The construction was not particularly strong for rough campaign use. After discharging all six chambers the user was unlikely to have an opportunity to go through the lengthy loading process in the midst of an action, and it was difficult to perform properly unless steady-handed and undistracted — nearly impossible, if mounted. Careless loading could lead to the dangerous 'flash-over' effect by which one fired chamber set off others simultaneously, which could cost the user his right hand. Perhaps worst of all for the colonial soldier, the .36 bullet was too light to have much stopping-power.

Later models of the Colt and the various other revolvers soon produced by British and Continental gunmakers appeared in larger, man-stopping calibres; but unfortunately even the newest breech-loading weapons taking brass-

*Lieutenant-Colonel Fred Burnaby, Royal Horse Guards, killed at Abu Klea in January 1885 while serving unofficially with the Desert Column. This reconstruction by Pierre Turner is published in colour in 'MP' No.12. He wears a white foreign service helmet, the dark blue Household Cavalry 'summer frock' trimmed with black braid, khaki whipcord breeches and Hessian boots, and a Sam Browne supporting the 1865 Household Cavalry sword and his holstered four-barrelled Lancaster. A binocular case and water bottle are slung round the body.*

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cased cartridges, while much faster and more practical to load, suffered from the inadequacy of the black powder propellant. After a brisk period of firing the fouling produced by this powder was apt to clog and jam the action. The freedom of the Lancaster pistols from this vice was one of their major attractions.

**Oval bored rifling**

The London gunmaker Charles Lancaster had patented a system of 'oval bored rifling'. The barrels of his rifles and pistols were bored smooth, without lands or grooves, but in a slightly oval shape rather than a true cylinder, this had a slight twist towards the muzzle, thus rotating the bullet. When Lancaster died in 1878 his works manager H.A.A. Thorn purchased the business and continued to trade under the Lancaster name, developing the possibilities of various existing systems.

In 1882 the firm produced four-barrelled rifles and guns, the former using the oval bore; but these were not a success due to the complex action, involving a trigger pull which initiated a revolving hammer striking each of four 'floating'

strikers in turn. Even the improved model, with two triggers — one to cock the action and the other to fire it — was generally rejected as hopelessly difficult to master for instinctive sports shooting. The accurate regulation of four rifled barrels joined together by ribs was also almost impossible.

At about the same time, however, Thorn produced the first of a range of pistols using the same principles. It was four-barrelled, oval-bored, and chambered for the .455 Adams revolver cartridge. This was soon followed by a double-barrelled 'over and under' pistol — handier for carrying in a holster — in the massive .577 calibre, taking a cartridge with a load of 27 grains of black powder and a round bullet weighing 25 to the pound. The first models were fitted with 'self-cocking' triggers, which had to be drawn back a consid-

derable distance between shots to rotate the internal striker mechanism. Later models offered (for an extra ten shillings) the Tranter patent cocking trigger — an extension to the trigger which cocked the weapon under pressure from the second finger, so that when the primary trigger was pulled with the first finger to fire the pistol the lighter, shorter pressure gave a better aim. The extension was hinged to allow holster carriage.

The barrels were hinged to the face of the breech and securely locked by a top lever. The construction was sturdy, and the internal action well protected from the elements. There was no revolving cylinder to jam through powder foul-

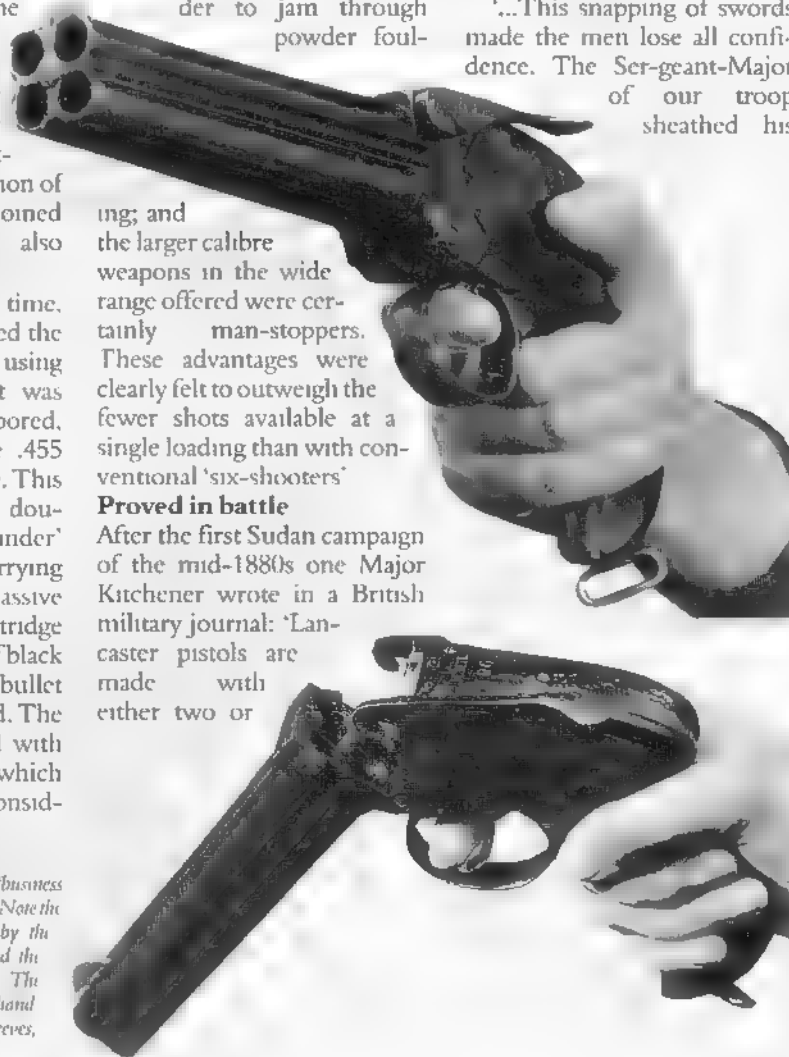
ing; and the larger calibre weapons in the wide range offered were certainly man-stoppers. These advantages were clearly felt to outweigh the fewer shots available at a single loading than with conventional 'six-shooters'.

**Proved in battle**  
 After the first Sudan campaign of the mid-1880s one Major Kitchener wrote in a British military journal: 'Lancaster pistols are made with either two or

four barrels; they possess the following advantages over the revolver:... Having no projecting parts, they are easier carried; having no hammer [i.e. no external hammer] they are safer; they shoot truer than the revolver, owing to there being no escape of gas between cylinder and barrel; for the same reason they may be supported on the left arm when firing, which cannot be done with safety with a revolver; they cannot jam; and lastly the mechanism, being well protected, is little, if at all, affected by sand, wet or dirt. These pistols were carried in the Sudan by Officers of the Royal Irish and others who all speak very highly of them.

A few years later a negative reference to the reliability of revolvers in the same theatre of war was quoted by Lancasters in the advertising for their pistols: it was an extract from a report in the *Daily Telegraph* of 7 January 1889 on the battle of Suakin, fought on 20 December 1888.

'...This snapping of swords made the men lose all confidence. The Ser-geant-Major of our troop sheathed his



**Centre & right:**  
 The Cecil pistol from the 'business end'; and broken for loading. Note the strong top latches worked by the thumb-lever on the left, and the massive general construction. The pistol balances well in the hand (Photographs Tom Reeves, courtesy Wallis & Wallis)





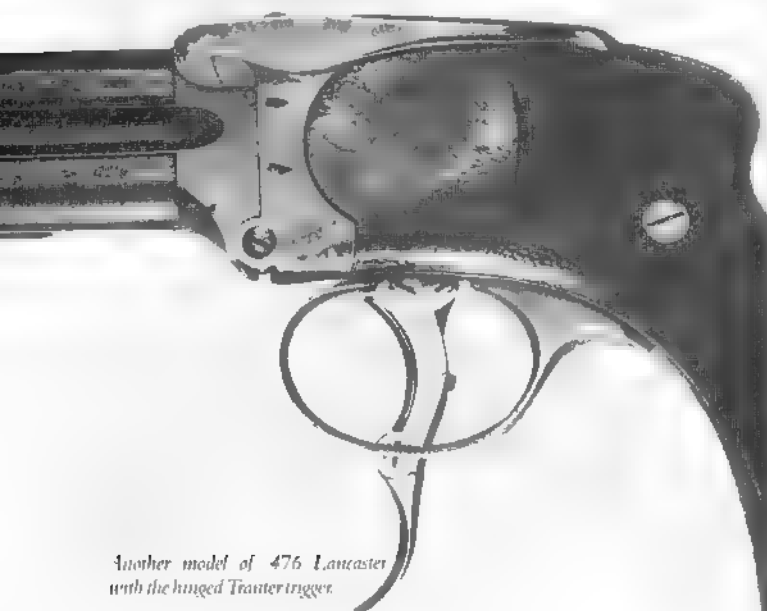
sabre and took to his revolver, but this speedily clogged and missed fire, as did many of the revolvers used by the men, although they [455 double-action Adams] were only lately served out... As far as general reputation goes they are wretched shooting irons.'

This 'general reputation' spread sufficiently widely among officers hardened in colonial campaigns for Lancasters to produce and sell some 9,000 of their massive, simple pistols in the last two decades of the Victorian era. Their death-knell was symbolically heard in the rapid fusillade with which a young officer taking part in the charge of the 21st Lancers at the battle

Lancaster four-barrelled pistol in 455 calibre, with oval 'rifling', no.8911, c.1890; length overall, 11 1/2 in.; barrels, 6 1/2 in., with its large holster complete with four cartridge loops and a tool pocket. This pistol, marked 'J GECIL 1GG', was sold at auction by Wallis & Wallis in autumn 1990. Lord Cecil served with the 1st Bn., Grenadier Guards in 1892-97. (Photograph Tom Reeves, courtesy Wallis & Wallis)

of Omdurman in 1898 shot his way out of a desperate mêlée. Lieut. Winston Churchill's 7.63mm Mauser 'broomhandle' ushered in the new generation of efficient semi-automatic handguns, and revolvers, loaded with non-fouling smokeless powder cartridges.

**[M]**



Another model of 476 Lancaster with the hinged Tranter trigger.

## 16th century flasks

In *MI* No. 18 Mr J. W. F. Harriman was kind enough to make some interesting points arising from my articles on the London Trained Bands (*MI* Nos. 14 & 15). I hope, with the editor's indulgence, to publish an article on the matchlock musket and its accoutrements in the future, so I will deal only with the main points that have been raised.

Mr Harriman doubts that a soldier would load with a charge which had not been measured in some way. Unfortunately there are enough examples of accidents and warnings given in drill books to demonstrate that the soldier of the 16th and 17th century was as careless with gunpowder as his modern imitators. The anonymous author of the 1623 pamphlet, *The Military Discipline, wherein is martially shewne the Order of Drilling for the Musket and Pike*, says of the carrying of gunpowder:

Some fantastical fellow will carry it in his pocket, trusting to his hand for the Charge... — which is to say that the method of loading was to take a handful of powder and let it trickle down the musket barrel.

While I would not dispute the efficiency of modern gunpowder of all grades, I do not think that too much can be learnt from modern re-enactment. Tudor and Stuart military arrangements began and ended with fraud and corruption, often in the form of adulteration of food and other supplies. In 1619 Edward Davies, in *The Art of War, and Englands Traynings*, warns the musketeer, who at this time had to pay for his own gunpowder, to make sure that it is not full of coal dust. He continues: 'Let him make his touch-powder, being finely sarsed (i.e. sieved) and sifted, with quick-pale, which is to be bought at the powder-makers or

apothecaries.' Almost every drill book and supply warrant of the period states that musketeers should carry a flask for their powder and a touch-box for their priming powder. Even after the general introduction of the paper cartridge musketeers continued to carry a separate priming flask, so a supply of powder of a fine grade for priming must have been necessary.

Turning to the question of powder flasks, I have seen examples and illustrations of four basic spout arrangements: a spring cut-off at top and bottom, a spring cut-off at the bottom only; a spout with a cap, and a plain spout. Some caps are evidently the size of a measured charge, but others are much too small and I believe that the primary use of a cap was to prevent stray sparks from entering the flask. In any event it would take two hands to pour powder from a flask into the cap, which would not be practical in military usage. A fortunate, or wealthy, arquebuser would be able to accurately measure a charge from his own flask with a spring cut-off, but my own experience is that due to clogging and user error these do not always deliver a full measure. Since arquebuses were not of a standard bore the charge would only be incorrect if the flask were made for a specific gun. In the Tudor militia weapons were usually stored in a church or at the home of a local dignitary, and it is clear from accounts of Trained Band muster days that they were handed out on a first come, first served basis. Given that the average arquebuser would find himself with an unfamiliar flask and a half-filled spout I suspect that he would have resorted to the time honoured calculation of 'pour some down and see what happens'.

John Tincey

## REVIEWS

**'The US Army in Vietnam' by Leroy Thompson; David & Charles; 256pp; 50 b/w illus., 16 col. illus.; £16.00**

Vietnam was a tragic and largely misunderstood war. *The US Army in Vietnam* by Leroy Thompson is an attempt to pierce some of the fog of that war by presenting a profile of the organization, weapons, equipment, and, to a limited degree, the fighting techniques of the United States Army during the period. Sadly, the volume is so riddled with factual errors, misidentified photographs, and broad generalizations that it only creates more fog. The errors start on the jacket flyleaf, where the reader is told that between 1959 and 1975 'more men were killed than in the whole of World War II'. This, of course, is outrageous nonsense: measured any possible way, the death toll of the Vietnam War adds up to only a fraction of that of World War II, or even World War I. Unfortunately, this is a widely-believed falsehood, particularly by many younger

Americans, and even their parents.

Perhaps the jacket text cannot be laid at the door of the book's author directly, but the volume itself is also littered with errors — although none on quite so grand a scale. The author's treatment of weapons and equipment contains some of the book's most serious mistakes. One picture of the experimental XM148 grenade launcher is identified as the later standard model M203. Another photograph is identified as a 'door gunner on an AH-1G gunship'. The AH-1G, the famous Cobra, does not have door gunners, it does not even have doors. The picture is clearly one of a UH-1B or a UH-1C Huey. In discussing the M26 fragmentation grenade, the author tells us: 'It was intended that the M26 be carried on or in ammunition pouches, each pouch holding three grenades within the pouch and one on each side'. Wrong again. The basic US web belt ammunition pouch used during Vietnam could hold two M14 rifle magazines, three of the smaller M16

rifle magazines, or one M26 grenade. It could also accommodate two M26 grenades externally, for a maximum of three grenades per pouch, not five.

Some of the author's statements even fail the test of simple logic. As an example: 'Since the M60 [machine gun] used the 7.62mm NATO round from a link belt, ammunition supply was somewhat of a problem in units armed with M16s; hence the ubiquitous photographs of troops in Vietnam carrying extra belts for the M60'. I've never heard or read of any general problems with the supply of 7.62mm linked ammo; and even if there were such shortages, then where did the troops get all those extra belts of ammo they carried? The basic reason for the 'ubiquitous photographs' of soldiers with extra ammo belts was the M60's high rate of fire. The more machine gun ammo a patrol could carry, the more use they'd get out of their M60 when they needed it. In many units standing operating procedure required all members of a patrol to carry two extra 100-round belts, which were passed up to the M60's assistant gunner when needed. The reason the belts were carried slung across the shoulder was that that was the best way to haul the stuff around. Machine gun ammunition is heavy and bulky. If ground troops tried to carry the ammo in the steel cans it came packed in (heavy enough themselves), their arms would tire rapidly and their hands wouldn't be free to use their weapons when needed. All of this should be readily obvious to anyone with elementary knowledge of infantry weapons and procedures.

The author's treatment of artillery is also very weak. He notes: 'In Vietnam particularly, the grunts needed the devastating hail of metal the artillery forward observer could call down in their support'. He fails to explain this statement or tell us why 'in Vietnam particularly'. This is just the sort of meaningless generalization that perpetuates the myth that combat in Vietnam was somehow more intense and deadly than in other wars, when the opposite was the case. Artillery experts from British Lt. Col. J.B.A. Bailey to US Col. Robert H. Scales, Jr. agree that a limited war like Vietnam requires the artillery to deliver measured and precise packages of firepower at the right place and time, rather than sheets of 'devastating hail'.

The author also describes the M102 howitzer as an 'improved version' of the venerable old M101A1 howitzer. The M102 was in fact an entirely different design — carriage, tube, fire control, and even the basic system of the trails. The only similarity was the 105mm ammunition both howitzers fired. In his discussion of the types of artillery ammunition used in Vietnam the author fails to mention the Improved Conventional Munition (ICM) round which was perhaps the most important development in artillery ammunition since appearance of the proximity fuze in World War II. (The ICM round delivers a cluster of submunitions.) Finally, the author discusses Harassing and Interdicting (H&I) artillery fire, which he claims was 'developed in Vietnam'. H&I fire,

in fact, has been around since at least World War I.

Numerous mistakes are present in the descriptions of US Army organizations. Starting at the top, the author tells us that during the Vietnam War the Army was managed by 'three staffs — Chief of Staff, General Staff, and Special Staff'. In the first place the Chief of Staff is not a staff; he is an individual, the senior general officer in the US Army. In the second place, the Special Staff at Department of the Army level only came into being some time after 1972. During the Vietnam War the General Staff, presided over by the Chief of Staff, ran the US Army. Moving down to the lower end of the scale, the author talks about 'Company Operations Sergeants' in infantry companies. Neither during this reviewer's infantry service in Vietnam, nor at any other time since, did such a position exist. The infantry battalion was and is the lowest level having an Operations Sergeant. The author also maintains that a US Special Forces C-Detachment 'can be equated to a company'. Companies in the US army, however, are commanded by captains; Special Forces C-Detachments are commanded by lieutenant colonels, who would undoubtedly be disappointed to find themselves on the same command level as a captain.

Mr. Thompson, whose own experience was with the US Air Force Security Police, seems to have no real understanding of his basic subject, the US Army. His book appears to be a patch-job, cobbled together from bits and pieces of many previous works. In some cases he even repeats errors contained in those earlier works. The book's dust jacket describes Mr. Thompson as a 'renowned military expert'. We must keep in mind that this was presumably written by the same people who tell us that more men died in Vietnam than in World War II.

DTZ

#### CARDS and PRINTS

'The Cavalry (I)'; set of 6 postcards; Geoff White Ltd., Little Acre, 19 Rushmoor Lane, Backwell, Bristol BS19 3JA; £2.40 plus UK P&P 65p

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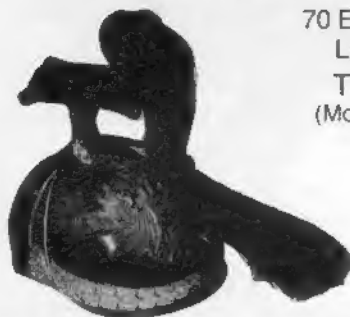
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# Luke O'Connor

MICHAEL BARTHORP  
Paintings by BRYAN FOSTEN

It has always been rare in the British Army for a man who joins as a private soldier in peacetime to gain a commission and reach high rank. One famous case was William Robertson, who enlisted in the 16th Lancers in 1877 and rose to become a field-marshal, a baronet, Chief of the Imperial General Staff from 1915 to 1918, and Colonel of the Royal Horse Guards. Less well-known is a man from an earlier generation, when commissioning from the ranks was even less common: Luke O'Connor, who not only rose from the ranks and went through three campaigns to become a major-general, a Knight Commander of the Bath, and Colonel of his Regiment, but also performed the first act of heroism in the Army to be rewarded with the Victoria Cross.

Though his military life was spent in a Welsh regiment, he was born an Irishman on 21 February 1831 at Elphin, Co. Roscommon. Nothing is known of his family nor his early years; but the 1840s in Ireland were a time of great poverty and distress, caused by overpopulation and the failure of the potato crop, leading to many deaths, evictions and mass emigration of the survivors, some to England but the majority to America. In view of the lack of information about O'Connor's family, then or later, it may be that they either died at that time or emigrated. What is known is that on 21 July 1849, at the age of 18, Luke O'Connor enlisted in the 23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers.

The 23rd had recently returned from eleven years' service in the West Indies and North America and was then quartered in Winchester where, nine days before O'Connor enlisted, it was presented with new Colours by the Prince Consort — Colours which were to have a significant influence on O'Connor's career. Whatever his background he must have displayed

great promise as a soldier, for in May the following year he was promoted corporal and a year later to sergeant, an uncommonly rapid rate of promotion.

The 23rd remained at Winchester until early 1854 when the Crimean War broke out. O'Connor, still aged only 23, was an experienced senior NCO with five years' service behind him, albeit spent peacefully in a quiet English garrison town. On 4 April 1854 the 23rd embarked at Southampton to join the Army of the East in which, brigaded under Brig. Gen. Codrington with its old Peninsular War comrades, the 7th Royal Fusiliers, and with the 33rd Duke of Wellington's, it would form part of the Light Division (see 'MF' No. 6). After landing in the Crimea the army advanced upon Sebastopol, only to find the way barred by the Russian army, holding high ground on the far side of the River Alma. In the ensuing attack, on 20 September, the Light Division was the left forward formation, with Codrington's brigade on the right having all three battalions in line: 7th right, 33rd centre, 23rd left, with its objective the



Major-General Sir Luke O'Connor, VC, KCB, aged 83. Painting by Algernon Smith. (Royal Welch Fusiliers)

Russian position known as the Great Redoubt, which contained 14 heavy guns and was strongly defended by infantry.

## HEROISM AT THE ALMA

In the centre of the 23rd's line was the Colour party, Ensign Anstruther with the Queen's Colour, Ensign Butler with the Regimental; between them, and thus plumb in the centre of his Regiment and thereby in the most conspicuous position, Sergeant Luke O'Connor. Under heavy fire and with ranks disordered by the river crossing, Codrington's brigade pushed on up to the Redoubt. As the 23rd drew close to it Butler fell, his Colour being taken up by Lt. Col. Chester. O'Connor appreciated they would be less vulnerable to the gunfire the closer they were to the Redoubt, and urged Anstruther on. At that moment the guns ceased fire and could

be heard limbering up. Then only 30 yards away, Anstruther led a rush forward, but was killed; and O'Connor, as he said later, 'was badly wounded in the breast with two ribs broken'. Anstruther's Colour was immediately picked up by Pte. Evans, who gave it to Cpl. Luby. Despite his wound O'Connor, mindful of his responsibility for the Colour, took it from Luby, and, running forward alone, planted it on the Redoubt. Thus encouraged, the others came up and the Redoubt was won. Capt. Bell of the 23rd went on alone and captured an enemy gun.

However, without supports and in some disorder after the headlong rush, Codrington's men could not withstand the inevitable Russian counter-attack, which was assisted by confusing orders among the British to retire, and they fell back to the river. O'Connor,

now suffering from his wound, was urged by Lt. Granville to go to the rear but he refused to relinquish the Queen's Colour. At the bank, and covered by the 1st Division which, having belatedly advanced, now went forward, Codrington reformed the remnants of his brigade, placing the 23rd's Colours, carried by O'Connor and another sergeant, in the centre, with between them the Regimental Colour of the 7th, which had been found still clutched by its dead ensign. Not until the 1st Division had secured the victory would O'Connor withdraw to have his wound attended to. The Colour which he had so devotedly borne was found to have 26 shot holes in it.

#### Promotion and decoration

Two days after the battle he was promoted colour-sergeant, and on 19 October was granted a commission without purchase as ensign for his gallant conduct. He was gazetted to the 76th Regiment, which at the time was in North America, but just over two weeks later he was enabled to exchange back into the 23rd. Shortly before his 24th birthday the following year he was promoted lieutenant without purchase. The Irish boy who had enlisted as a private six years earlier had achieved a commissioned rank at an age only a year or two older than other young officers who had obtained their commissions by the more conventional means.

It is not known how long he was incapacitated by his wound; but on 8 September 1855 he again distinguished himself by 'his cool heroism and the splendid example he set to all about him' during the 23rd's part in the unsuccessful assault on the Redan, when the Regiment had to advance from the trenches across nearly 300 yards of open ground under heavy gunfire. Here he was again wounded, being shot through both thighs.

After the war, in 1856, the Victoria Cross was instituted to reward officers and men who had 'performed some single act of valour or devotion to their country in the presence of the enemy'. On 24 February 1857

Luke O'Connor's Cross was gazetted for his gallantry at the Alma and the Redan. His name appeared in the first list of VC winners and his deed at the Alma, with that of Capt. Bell, were the first chronologically to be rewarded in the Army (four Royal Naval Crosses were awarded for acts between June and September 1854). He was presented with his VC by Queen Victoria in Hyde Park on 26 June 1857; afterwards he said he 'only did a soldier's duty'.

#### The Great Mutiny

Soon after this investiture the 23rd, which had returned home after the Crimea, was ordered to China as part of an expedition. When the transports reached the Bay of Bengal, all were diverted to Calcutta to assist in the suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny. Having disembarked in mid-September, the 23rd moved up-country to join Sir Colin Campbell's force for the relief and evacuation of the garrison holding the Lucknow Residency (see *MF* Nos. 2, 19 and 21). After this was completed the Regiment took part in the operations around Cawnpore in December, and finally the recapture of Lucknow in March 1858. It remained at Lucknow from where it assisted in the mopping-up of the remaining mutineers until 1859. O'Connor went through the whole campaign as a company subaltern, receiving his captaincy, again without purchase, in September 1858.

The 23rd stayed in India for another ten years. By then the Regiment had acquired a second battalion as a result of the increase to the Army in 1858; and in 1872 O'Connor, now in that battalion, was granted a brevet-majority, a reward for distinguished service in the field by which he became a major in the Army, while retaining his regimental rank of captain in his battalion.

#### Ashanti

In 1873-74 he accompanied the 2/23rd on the Ashanti campaign in West Africa as a company commander (one of two VCs in the battalion at that time, the other being Maj.

Hackett who had won his Cross in the Mutiny). For his services in Ashanti he received a brevet-lieutenant-colonelcy on 1 April 1874 and attained his full majority four months later.

There is no record of his assuming any staff appointments, and he remained a regimental officer with the 2/23rd when it was quartered at Gibraltar between 1874-80. However, with two brevets to his name, and with a third, to colonel, in 1879, he was marked for promotion. On 21 June 1880, at the age of 49, he realised the ambition of every good regimental officer in those days, by being promoted to lieutenant-colonel and appointed to command his battalion. It was 31 years since he had joined the Regiment as a private — a very considerable achievement in the Victorian Army.

He commanded 2/23rd for five years during which time they were stationed in England and Ireland, latterly at Templemore, some 80 miles from his birthplace. On relinquishing command in 1885 he went on half-pay. There is no record of his being offered further employment; but a week after retiring from the Army in March 1887, at the age of 56, he was granted the rank of major-general.

How he occupied his retirement is not known, but further honours followed: in 1906 he was made CB, and in 1913 the next grade in that Order transformed him into Sir Luke. He always kept up with his old Regiment, making a particular point of attending whenever he could its Alma Day celebrations. A photograph exists of him at the age of 82, mounted and in uniform, being cheered by the 1st Battalion in hollow square on Alma Day, 1913. The following year on 3 June, two months before the outbreak of a greater war than even he had known, he received the honour which perhaps he treasured most of all: Colonelcy of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, the regiment in which he had served in every regimental rank from the most junior to the most senior. He held this appointment through the opening months of the Great War until death

**Bryan Fosten's reconstructions on the rear cover show O'Connor (left) aged 23, as a Sergeant, 23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers, winning the Victoria Cross at the Alma on 20 September 1854. He is uniformed and accoutred as described and illustrated in the present writer's article on the Light Division at the Alma in *'MI'* No. 6, pp. 8-16.**

**(Right) O'Connor as Captain and Brevet Major, commanding a company of the 2nd Bn., 23rd, during the Ashanti War, 1873-74. He wears the special service uniform devised for that campaign, of 'Elcho grey tweed', with foreign service helmet and canvas leggings. His medal ribbons are (top) VC, British Crimean and Indian Mutiny medals; (below) Turkish Order of the Medjidie, Turkish and Sardinian Crimean medals. He is accoutred with a Sam Browne belt suspending his revolver, ammunition pouch, clasp knife, and the Elcho sword bayonet recommended by Garnet Wolseley, the force commander, as more suitable for all officers than the regulation sword for forest fighting.**

claimed him on 1 February 1915, just before his 84th birthday. Luke O'Connor never married, and towards the end of his life he lived in London at Clarges Street, Mayfair, from where he was a regular attender at the Roman Catholic church in Farm Street, in which a plaque was erected to his memory.

He never held important staff appointments, nor commanded more than a battalion. But to have reached high rank and an honoured place in the Army and society, to have gained three brevet-promotions and won the highest gallantry award, all from humble beginnings and in an age when the British Army was rigidly structured, must surely testify to the sterling qualities of this Irishman who found a home in, and devoted his life to, the Royal Welch Fusiliers. **MI**

(The assistance of Mr. Norman Holme, archivist to the Royal Welch Fusiliers, is gratefully acknowledged.)

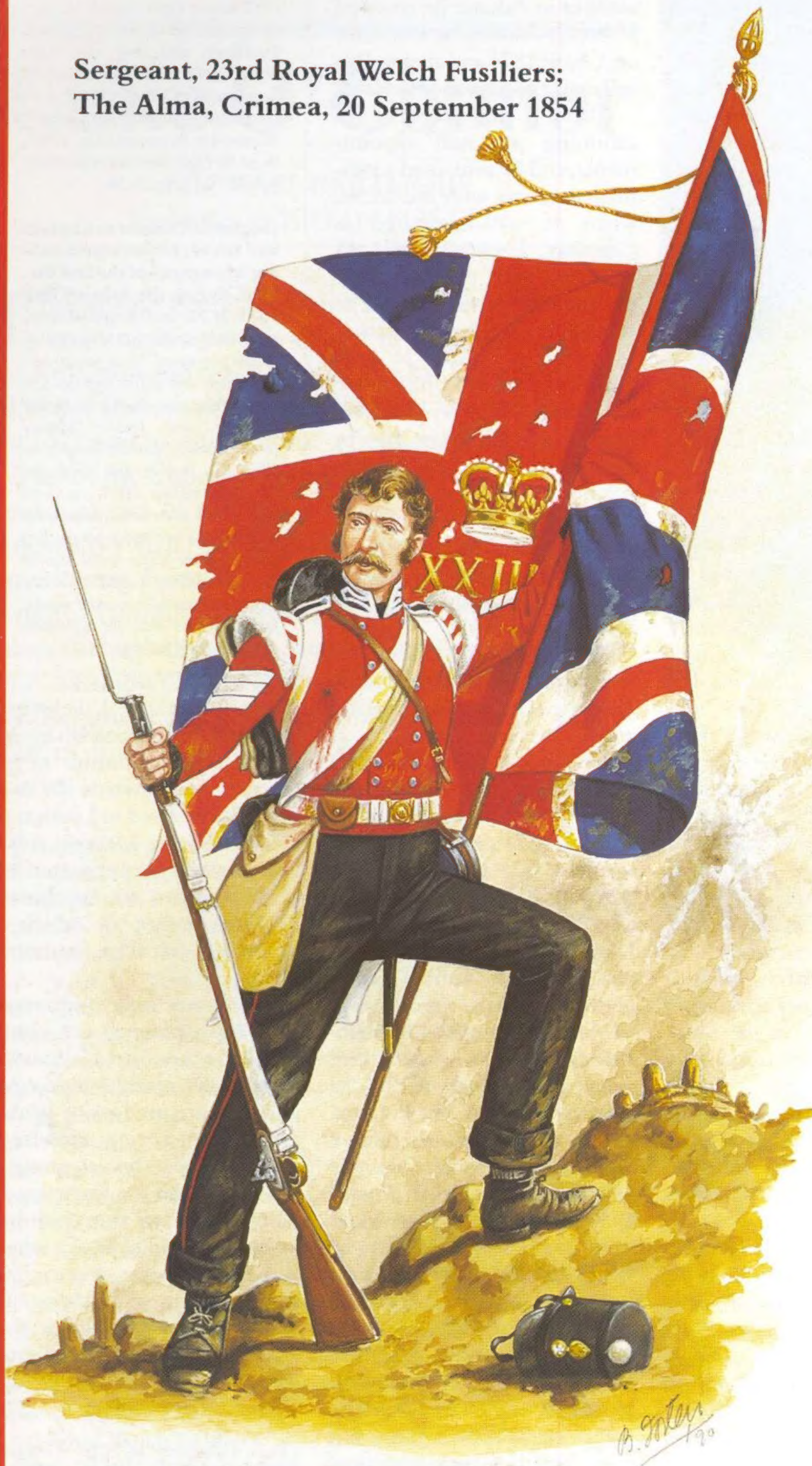
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Sergeant, 23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers;  
The Alma, Crimea, 20 September 1854

Luke  
O'Connor



Captain, 2nd Bn., 23rd Royal Welch  
Fusiliers; Ashanti, W. Africa, 1873-74

